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THE REBUILDING OF MAN



WE LIVE in a scientific age—one has only to look at the ruins in Coventry or London or Stalingrad to see that. And being scientifically minded we have a healthy scorn of superstition. Yet it is a curious fact that if we look for survivals of superstition at the present day we shall find them most striking and most active among the votaries of science and even, though to a rapidly dwindling extent, among scientists themselves of a certain type. One is not thinking of ladders or salt or the number thirteen: there are more important superstitions than that. Superstition means the attribution of supernatural power to purely natural things. One does not associate that sort of thing with the scientifically minded because so many of them assert their disbelief in supernatural power altogether; but if one looks a little more closely one finds that in fact some of them reject God only to invent a mythology of their own. They reject God the eternal Father, but they invent an improbable Pickwickian figure called Benevolent Progress; they reject the divine Mind but they salute a deity called Blind Chance—not a searing, consuming fire but a wayward, unpredictable sprite.

It seems possible and indeed likely that the world after war will find itself more and more definitely dividing into the two opposing camps of those who believe in God and those who do not, and that the struggle between them—a new phase of the perennial cosmic struggle—will decide the shape of the things to come. That is why this question of superstition is of such immense practical importance for the world. What we think about God determines what we think about man; and what we think about man determines what we think about the world man lives in and the structure of human society. The reality of the struggle between believer and non-believer is not disproved, it is only complicated, by the fact that both will be equally convinced of the necessity of some practical material reform. Both may advocate, for example, some form of social service; but the difference in their way of thinking about the nature of man will reveal itself in the manner in which the social service is administered—for the one it will be a personal serving of persons and for the other an efficient soulless material improvement of an impersonal standard of living. There are many today who believe that science is the only thing that can teach us how to build a new world, and that science is enough. To the believer in God, with all that that belief implies about the nature of man, such an outlook is bound to doom men ultimately to degradation and death, however right and necessary the various particular points in the social program may be. And if belief in science, not as servant but as leader, is really belief in some modern mythology, then indeed we are doomed. If we put our faith in a god of benevolent progress instead of realizing that progress is something we have to create with the sweat of our brow, then we end—as we have in fact done so recently—in an air-raid shelter. If we put our faith in blind chance we probably fail to get as far as the shelter.

One of the most popular present-day misconceptions is the idea that Marxist communism preaches a doctrine of social revolution. In fact, this is just what it does not do. It is the Christian (if he is both alive to the social iniquities of the world and faithful to the teaching of the Gospels and the Church)

who advocates social revolution; the Marxist preaches a doctrine of social evolution, which is a very different matter. The difference is only modified, not substantially changed, by adding that the evolutionary process can be accelerated by human will and effort.

Again, a famous biologist asks how the existence of organized bodies is to be explained. One gathers that his answer is that the existence of organized bodies is due to certain properties in matter which (on his own view) are such as to make it wildly improbable that organized bodies should ever exist at all. Now of course there is nothing wrong necessarily with these scientific statements. If all the available facts go to show that the presence of the world in the universe and the presence of man in the world are the result of improbable accidents, very well; one cannot say fairer than that. But the point is that one cannot, as a scientist, say further than that. The trouble is that many scientists in the past did go much further than that, and some scientists and a far greater number of camp-followers still do. They are not content to say, "What science can tell us leaves things somewhat unintelligible, so we must go to other avenues of knowledge for the ultimate answers." They say, "What science tells us may seem to leave things somewhat unintelligible but we have to make the best of it because there aren't any other avenues of knowledge and therefore there aren't any other answers." So we are left to make what we can of the gods of the new Olympus. We are invited to accept the idea that the universe is ultimately unintelligible rather than accept an explanation which is not offered by science itself. But lacking an answer to the ultimate questions we are surely likely to be somewhat at a loss in attempting to deal with the immediate particular questions. If a man sets out to build a house it is desirable that he should know something at least of the character and requirements of the people who are going to live in it; without that, we shall probably be led to exclaim with the poet that, with all its good qualities, "'tis a house, but not a dwelling." The outline of the postwar world as sketched by some reformers does indeed suggest a house rather than a dwell-

ling: a house imposing, elegant, equipped with every modern convenience, but lacking the breath of humanity. We cannot build a house fit for humans until we have decided why human beings are here at all. And that is where science, despite its greatness and the immense blessings it can confer on us, must necessarily fail us.

We shall not see clearly the shape of the coming struggle unless we recall the history of our civilization in recent centuries. That history reveals to us a process of diminution in the stature of man, a process which reduced him from something a little less than a god to something a little more than a bundle of reflexes. The Renaissance tried to abolish religion and faith, to rob man of his infinity (for the essence of Christianity is in this belief, that God took upon Himself our humanity that He might raise us to His divinity), though it left his natural powers intact. Eighteenth century rationalism went further, took away man's poetry as well as his prayer, and made him a thinking machine. Nineteenth century science went further still, and took away not only our prayer and our poetry but our philosophy as well. The only valid thinking was now scientific thinking; knowledge meant simply observing and classifying physical facts and the relations between them. Further, the nineteenth century scientist did not say merely that science was the only thing that could reveal reality to us; he said that anything that science could not reveal could not be revealed at all because it was not there, it did not exist. It has been said that the masses are usually fifty years behind the scientists themselves in their beliefs about science. So it comes about that today there are vast numbers of people who hold strongly if uncritically to this old-fashioned conception and who continue to pin their faith to science as a guide—as the only guide—to life, unaware that science of its very nature can only serve and never lead.

Science cannot lead because it cannot answer the ultimate question *Why*. Long ago Francis Bacon noted that science has nothing to do with final causes, with reasons why. It can tell us what things are and how they work; it cannot tell us ulti-

mately why they are.¹ Why things are is not a scientific question but a philosophical question. The trouble starts when people insist on regarding it as a scientific question and ask science to answer it. Naturally enough science cannot, and then they become very puzzled and regard the universe as very mysterious. To acquiesce in that state of affairs is not modern enlightenment; it is modern obscurantism. To act on that obscurantist assumption is ultimately to bring down darkness over the earth. We of the modern west are the only people in the whole history of the world, and the only people in the world today, who have refused to answer the questions *why* and *whither* philosophically, in terms of a divine mind and will and purpose. That fact alone might make us uneasy. But the point for the moment is this: that belief in God comes from asking the question *Why*, and because it is a philosophical question the answer does not depend at all on what science has to say in its own restricted sphere. It comes from asking the question *Why* because if we say, "Why do I exist? Why does anything exist at all?" there is only one intelligible answer. All the things that we know come to be and pass away: in other words they can either be or not be. They do not exist of themselves, but can only exist because they have existence from something else. And ultimately that something else must be a being that does exist of itself, not something that has being but something that is being—something which in fact we call Being Itself. And if we go on to discuss the relation of everything else to this Being, and take account of the presence of order and design in the universe, we shall conclude that the Being is mind and will, in other words not an It but a He. And then we shall be at the threshold of religion. When we have passed across that threshold our ideas about human nature, among other things, will be revolutionized.

¹ It is perhaps advisable to emphasize the word "ultimately." To say that science deals with "how" and philosophy with "why" is not entirely accurate. The scientist is presumably better equipped than anyone else to tell us why a chicken crosses the road, and even why this particular chicken is in a position to be on this particular road. But the scientist is not equipped to tell us, as a scientist, why things (including chickens) exist at all.

There is a particular branch of modern science which is of special relevance at this point. One sometimes hears people declaring roundly that psychology has shown how God is simply a rationalization of our longing for security, a sort of exalted substitute for the human father. It is all very well then, they say, to tell us that we can find no adequate answer to the problem of existence apart from the existence of God. We wish we *could* believe in God and therefore in an adequate answer, but we can't because science shows us facts and we can't deny facts however attractive it might be to do so. Now here it would seem they are making a double mistake. They are invoking science for a decision beyond the point at which science of its nature ceases to be competent and must give way to philosophy. They are also—it is at least arguable—misinterpreting the testimony of science itself. It is true that they can find authority for what they say in the views of Freud, but Freud though an investigator of genius was certainly not a first-rate thinker. And while it is fairly true to say that for Freud religion is a disease of the mind, for Jung in the later stages of his thought the case is very different. Indeed it is nearer the truth to say that for him the absence of religion is the root cause of diseases of the mind. His account of the mind and personality bears a startling resemblance to that given by Catholic theology. The longing for spiritual rebirth, the need of redemption, the need of integration, all these things which find expression in the "secular dreams of humanity" are very easily put into theological terms. To the sociological significance of those secular dreams we shall have to return later on; for the moment it is worth pausing to inquire whether there is not here an answer to a problem which sometimes troubles Christians themselves. Do not the striking parallels which exist between the Christian dogmas and the myths of the other religions of the world prove that all are equally of human invention, all equally made out of the stuff of human desires and dreams? The first answer would seem to be this: that if you accept the hypothesis of a primitive revelation made by God to the ancestors of the human race, then so far from being surprised you must surely expect to find

traces of it, twisted versions of it, scattered about the world. Think how carefully it must have been guarded and handed on. It would no doubt be surprising if in the course of the ages it did not become mixed with error and distorted, but it would be still more surprising if it were to disappear altogether. There is a second answer, however. If we believe in the goodness of God we shall believe that there is a correspondence between man's nature and his destiny, between what he dreams of and longs for in the deepest levels of his being and what God has in fact prepared for those who love Him. Redemption is not only something given; it is something desired. Even when the promise of it is forgotten it must remain in the depths of the human soul as a need and a dream. And so we shall expect that all over the world men will find symbols to express the reality, even though they do not know it to be a reality. We shall expect to find echoes of Christian facts in pagan myths, because everywhere the heart of man and its deepest needs are the same.

The secular dreams of humanity—are we to build our world as an act of faith in them or are we to ignore them? That is the main question which confronts us. The alignment, in terms of beliefs, is clear. On the one hand there are those who pin their faith exclusively to science, in the ordinary colloquial sense of the word, and deny the existence of other avenues of knowledge. On the other hand there are those who, through philosophy or psychology or poetry or faith, have come to recognize that man is far greater and his needs far deeper than science paints them; that bread and circuses are necessary indeed but are not the *unum necessarium* of which the Gospels tell us, not the thing most necessary of all; that science with all its benefits is not the whole of life but a small part of it, which has to be integrated into the whole if man is to be happy. This latter point has indeed been made abundantly clear by modern psychology within the sphere of science itself; for it has shown us not only that human life is expressible in terms of four functions (thinking, feeling, sensation, intuition) instead of one, but that the desires of man, by whatever name we choose to call them, have an infinity which no scientific or scientifically measurable

object can hope to fulfil. The secular dreams of humanity: let us examine them a little more closely.

"The roots of our thoughts and feelings are not here but in other worlds," says Zozima in *The Brothers Karamazov*, and if the sense of oneness with those other worlds "grows weak or is destroyed in you the heavenly growth will die in you. Then you will be indifferent to life and even grow to hate it." The world today is the prey of men who hate life and seek to destroy it. But they are only the desperate conclusion of a long process of denial and decay, a process which will go on, whatever happens to them, unless the essential direction of our lives is changed.

In the beginning we are told God planted a garden, and set therein the man He had made, to dress it and keep it; and He made for him a helpmeet like to himself; and He walked with them in the garden in the cool of the evening. Man was made to be happy, and his way to happiness is symbolized in these things. Life is movement and growth, but it is a stupidity confined to the modern west to suppose that it matters little whither we are moving provided we are moving fast enough. If we are to be happy, the deepest desires of our nature must be fulfilled. At the core of all reality there is, as Aristotle saw, a hunger, a hunger conscious or unconscious for actuality and therefore in the last resort for the Pure Actuality which we call God. We can put the fact in terms of St. Thomas' *naturale desiderium* or of Jung's *libido*, but the basis of the fact itself remains the same. Man is a paradox, for in him are two apparently opposed tendencies. He must grow to a more and more complete independence if he wishes to become in the fullest sense a person. On the other hand he must grow to a more and more complete union with the reality which surrounds him if he is to satisfy this deep-lying hunger at the core of his being. But these two things are only in appearance opposed. Independence alone means not fullness of personality but loneliness and vacancy. Oneness with reality without independence means a permanent arresting of development at the infantile level. Through the two together we come to the fullness of our human stature. "In the mother's body man knows the universe," says an old

Jewish proverb, "in birth he forgets it." The main business of living is in the rediscovery of it, a rediscovery which should itself involve the process of growth to independence. "He that loseth his life shall find it." The cleavage between the two points of view we have been considering is here most forcibly revealed. The perennial temptation of man—a temptation to what the theologians call pride, *super-bia*, the primal sin—is precisely the temptation to attempt to achieve independence by itself, complete autonomy, in proud isolation from reality, to find life without losing it.

The lesson we find adumbrated in the mythologies of the world, and clearly and explicitly stated in the Christian revelation, is that the attempt is futile. We must die if we wish to be reborn; we must descend into hell if we wish to ascend into heaven; we must fight the dragon, the serpent, if we wish to win the treasure of life. In other words, we must recognize that we are twisted creatures in a twisted world, tempted always to try to achieve autonomy, to isolate ourselves, to forget the universe into which we are born and our roots in other worlds, and so to make it impossible for ourselves ever to be made whole. We must recognize in ourselves the presence of evil, see ourselves as small units in the cosmic struggle of evil with good, and so, through facing the fact of evil, come to understand something of the nature of the Good. This is just what scientific humanism will not do. Just as it will acknowledge only one of the four functions of the human personality, so it will acknowledge only one of the two terms of the paradox of personality, the desire for independence; and so too it closes its eyes to the fact of evil within the personality.

One of the most obvious characteristics of nineteenth century scientific humanism as we look back on it now was precisely its shallowness. We have learned better by said experience. Instead of finding ourselves in a golden age we have seen the foundations of our world swept from under us. Instead of seeing man advance from glory to glory we have found in him again the face of the beast. Dr. Rauschning in one of his books describes his horror at the change which took place in men who had been

his friends and colleagues: "They looked different, their features became mask-like. Something alien was living in them and speaking from within them. Their voices became shrill, their eyes became rigid." There is a mystery of iniquity which just cannot be explained in ordinary natural terms, and today it is showing itself not in one country alone but throughout the world. One of the most valuable things that Jung has done is to teach us again to believe in the devil, to rediscover the sense of sin and the need of redemption. That need of redemption is indeed at the centre of humanity's secular dreams, but while we cannot escape it we can and do forget it so that it ceases to be in us a force making for good. We cannot be truly religious, as the English mystic William Law said, if we have only known the "want of a Saviour by hearsay." Once go below the surface of human life and you find a depth of evil, and a depth also of good, that will make the easy optimism of scientific humanism look like a dead leaf on the wind. The heart of man is an abyss, and all the kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof will not fill it. Go deep down into it and you will find either a greatness and a glory that will strike you dumb because they are the presence of God Himself, or a stark tense humorless evil that will turn you cold. More probably you will find both, for "the whole creation is in travail even until now." But whatever you find it will lead you to God if you have eyes to see, for you will have touched something mightier than man. You will also have learned something of the lesson which to the scientific humanist is foolishness but which the great teachers of the world have known to be the only path to wisdom: humility. So, having gone down into hell, you will be able to rise again to life, to find a new heaven and a new earth.

In the beginning God planted a garden . . . In the mother's body man knows the universe . . . What have we lost? The mystics tell us that the human spirit is a *scintilla Dei*, a spark of the infinite Fire. The philosophers tell us that all reality is one. In a different way the child and the primitive savage can tell us both these things. You find children absorbed in long

conversations with a flower, a doll, a puppy, a human being, all with equal gravity. To the primitive, what has been called his *participation mystique* with the rest of reality, his sense of oneness with it, is far more real than the subject-object relationship into which we in our rationalism tend to split it up. The mystics reinforce these lessons, and take them explicitly to their logical conclusion. "He sees God aright," says one of them, "who sees Him in all things." We tend to lose our power of vision, our sense of oneness with reality; we treat things simply as means rather than as things-in-themselves; and so we see them without looking at them and so without realizing what they are and mean in themselves, and without loving them. We remain in isolation. We may be lords of creation, but we are kings without a court. But even though we do look long and lovingly at things we shall not see them whole unless we see them all together as a family in God and God in them. The love of Nature can be selfish and shallow if it is not set in the love of humanity; and the love of humanity in its turn will not prevent us from being cruel to men and women unless it is set in the love of God. For the self in its pride will always tend to treat things as its creatures, as means to its own ends, as long as it sees them and itself apart from God. What have we lost? We have lost precisely this, our fullness. We refuse to walk any longer with God in the garden. Whether that refusal was a rejection of the supreme reality, as the Christian holds, or, as others would have us believe, the achievement of freedom from the tyranny of a fantasy-world, there is little room for dispute about its consequences. Our awareness is smothered: in our childhood by our form of education, which clogs the mind with information while smothering the faculty of vision; in our maturity by our concentration on commercial and utilitarian ends. We are given the power to see reality and love it, and so, in our oneness with reality, to become creators ourselves. But in fact too many of us become the slaves of a subhuman system which ignores these primary rights of man; and even apart from this we forget our rights when we forget our origins, our roots in other worlds.

In the beginning God planted a garden and set therein the man He had made, to see and love and in his turn to create. Scientific materialism planted a slum, and set therein the Economic Man it had made, to be a visionless "hand," robbed by economic pressure of his three fundamental rights. The spirit of man has been beaten to the dust. If we want proof that man cannot live by science alone we need look no further than recent history. There are three levels in man, the rational, the subrational, the suprarational. We do not remedy the denial of one by denying another; not only that, but if we do in fact deny one it will eventually have its revenge on us. Scientific materialism, in its nineteenth-century individualist form, denied the instinctive, intuitive, mystical, social elements in humanity. They have reasserted themselves, but unfortunately in a catastrophic manner, which took the diminution of man into a further and final stage. We have got to choose between the denial of man and the affirmation of man. Rationalism denied the suprarational and the subrational. Nazism denies the rational and the suprarational. There have been religious movements which denied the rational and the subrational. Always the result is the same: the neglected elements sooner or later reassert themselves, and usually with disastrous effect. We know enough nowadays of the effects of repression in the individual. We have seen more than enough of the effects of repression in a society—for the greater the element repressed the more terrible the effects. We are witnessing now the effect of repressing the deepest roots of our thoughts and feelings: the brutal hatred of life, not blind as faith in science is blind, but purposive as evil is purposive, seeking to destroy for the sake of destruction. We have got to choose between denial and affirmation. If we choose affirmation then it must be a total affirmation, for anything else is itself a denial.

We cannot hope to rebuild the world unless we rebuild man the builder of the world. To do that it is essential to reaffirm that all living is first of all seeing and loving—is first of all the rediscovery of our oneness with reality—and then making: the making of new being in the mystery of human love and in the

fashioning of material and spiritual things. But it is of no use to affirm these things unless we affirm also, and in the first place, the *unum necessarium*, the one thing which can unify them and make them fruitful of life and preserve in them the humility, the reverence, without which there is no awareness and no wisdom and no great art. Scientific humanism as such can have no use for reverence towards things. Its whole tendency is to dominate, to be master of nature, to treat things simply as means. But "I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet. . . ." From dominating it is a short step to domineering and grasping, and if we reach that stage we have sold ourselves to the devil because through self-idolatry we have established the ego in hopeless isolation. If he is true to his nature the lord and master of Nature is also the *servus servorum Dei*; without that double role he can never see reality whole or be whole himself. The love of art or Nature apart from man tends to become a selfish and socially irresponsible aestheticism. The love of humanity apart from God tends to become worship of a fantasy, a projection, an exaltation of self which is quite compatible with hatred and contempt of men. Man-centeredness soon sinks into self-centeredness. It is not thus that we can hope to build a better world.

Professor Berdyaev in his book on Dostoievsky draws a comparison between the ages of Dante, Shakespeare and Dostoievsky himself. The first is the age of the God-centered humanism in which man sees himself and accepts himself as part of a world order: "God and Satan, heaven and hell, are not revealed within the human spirit and by human experience; they are given to man from outside and they have a reality equal to that of objects in the material world." After the Renaissance there is an "absolutely new notion of the world. When the humanist era was established, with its self-affirmation and shutting-up of man within the walls of nature, heaven and hell were closed—but an infinity of worlds was opened. There was no longer a single cosmos with an ordered hierarchy; this infinite empty sky of the astronomers was not like Dante's sky, the medieval heaven, and that terror which Pascal experienced before the

'endless spaces' may be understood: man was lost in these vast solitudes which were no longer subject to any cosmic order. So he turned inward to himself, entering the psychic realm, and took refuge more and more in the earth, frightened of being separated from her in face of that new and strange infinitude. This is the humanistic period of modern times, in the course of which man's creative forces have been played out. He is no longer bound by any objective world-order, given from above; he feels free. . . . (He) had renounced the center of his soul and remained at the periphery." But the deeper forces in human nature would not be ignored and silenced indefinitely; they took their revenge. When God and Satan had been denied reality, man himself became a "flat creature in two dimensions—he had lost that of depth; his soul was left to him but his spirit had gone." But when the first creative energy of the Renaissance had worked itself out the shallow surface began to crack: "sudden rumblings were heard and the volcanic nature of the underworld was manifested. In man himself an abyss opened, and therein God and heaven, the devil and hell were revealed anew. . . . Human freedom abandoned the psychic world in whose daylight it had existed since the Renaissance and plunged into the depths of the spiritual world. It is like a descent into hell. But there man will find again not only Satan and his kingdom, but also God and heaven; and they will no longer be revealed in accordance with the objective order imposed from without but by way of a face-to-face meeting with the ultimate depths of the human spirit, as an inwardly revealed reality."²

The first age is the age of simple extraversion: worshipping the Transcendent with the simple faith of the child, and creating in simplicity and worship. The second is the age of lonely intraversion: worshipping man in self-assurance and arrogance and creating superficially and in pride. The third is to be (for Dostoievsky spoke as a prophet) the age of integration of outer and inner worlds: recognizing the oneness of all creation in

² Nicolas Berdyaev: *Dostoievsky*, pp. 46-49.

God, worshipping the Transcendent revealed *within*, through the tortures of the human spirit struggling to its rebirth, and creating in the proud humility of the man-child—humbled like the returning prodigal, discovering that wisdom is not self-made from within; proud in the glory of a restored heritage and in the strength that cries “I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me.”

There is no great art without reverence. There is something shallow and tawdry about that type of art which tortures its material to extol the isolated-human. We make great art when we reverence our material, and reverence the Maker of the material, and when our making itself is ultimately an act of worship. “Is not man’s heart an abyss?” We are groping now in the depths; we have seen more than we can well bear of their miseries. To offer to humanity at this stage a return to the shallows of a man-centered world, the windy blare of Renaissance self-glorification, the commodious surface-correctness of classicism, the pseudo-mysticism of the romantics, is like offering a starving man a candy. It is bread that we need. But those who would offer us instead of bread the stones of the industrial capitalism we have known, who would offer to lead us back to the misery and subhumanity which have already crushed so many, they will surely find that the stones will fall upon them, and pay for their folly or crime in blood. You cannot fool all the people all the time.⁸ But man’s heart is an abyss. He must have bread; he must have freedom and power

⁸ “The people of this country have suffered agony as never before, they have endured as never before. If at the end they find they have been enduring in order to restore its profits to privilege, the heart of the English will be broken, as Hitler could not break it. It will break and we shall decay. . . .

“It is curious how many people think of the profit system as sacred. Yet it is a system, imperfect, not a way of living. It has been imposed on the real values of civilization. It has heaped up great riches and great rottenness. It made magnificent technical advances and used them to dehumanize whole classes. It was never able to save millions of people from self-contempt, insecurity, hunger. It vomited slums over the whole country, and broke down in the tumours called modern cities. By regarding millions of men and women as hands or as human scrap it has been slowly taking the heart out of us—and might by now have finished the job but that we have good hearts.” (Storm Jameson: *The End of This War*, George Allen Unwin, London, 1941, p. 41.)

to create; but above all he must have freedom to find again what can fulfill his heart. The roots of our thoughts and feelings are in other worlds. Dostoevsky spoke as a prophet. "Love all God's creation, the whole, and every grain of sand in it. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light. Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything you will perceive the divine mystery in things. Once you perceive it, you will begin to comprehend it better every day." And you will begin to *live*. Again: "We are each responsible for all. . . . My brother asked the birds to forgive him; that sounds senseless, but it is right; for all is like an ocean, all is flowing and blending; a touch in one place sets up movement at the other end of the earth." If you begin by treating creatures other than man as mere utilities you will end by treating men as mere utilities. Then you may produce a very tidy blue-print of a world order, but it will be the blue-print of a tyranny. We were meant to be masters in the Garden; but if masters, lovers also and therefore servants. And now that evil has twisted and warped the world—evil which is also our responsibility—we are meant not to domineer but to redeem. "The whole of creation is in travail even until now." We are meant to share through the power of Christ in his redemptive activity in the world: an activity which does not exclude the return of the universe as a whole to its eternal Principle. We cannot rebuild the world without awareness of the unity of the world; but we cannot have that awareness in the depths of the spirit where wisdom lies without awareness that its unity is its oneness with God.

Alone of all historical civilizations the modern western world rejected contemplation—the life of the spirit as opposed to the life of practical and utilitarian reason—as the basis of life. Alone among all the great philosophies modern western thinkers have refused to find the key to unity in a One which is transcendent. So we are robbed of the hope of fulfilment for our secular dreams; and we pay the price in our neuroses and mental disorders of every kind. Yet the West has in its heritage that which would save it and restore it to health. (We sometimes forget that redemptive grace is something which is meant to

heal the whole personality; we forget as the early Church never did that the sacramental system and the liturgy are meant to bring health to body, mind, and soul alike.) The doctrine of the incarnation of the Word, which is the descent of the Transcendent into space and time, is an affirmation of the reality of heaven and earth alike. It offers peace to the world because it brings power to the world: power to slay the dragon, to die and be reborn (for what Christ has done must be done again in every Christian), to restore oneness with reality by being restored anew to oneness with the One. So it affirms that God is transcendent indeed, but that the Transcendent is also immanent in his creatures. It affirms the supremacy of God; but it affirms also the value of the human person, each hair of whose head is numbered. It finds the explanation of the manifold in the One, and for that very reason holds fast to the intrinsic value of the least created thing, for not a sparrow can fall to the ground uncared for by the heavenly Father. It teaches—against the capitalist or the totalitarian inhumanities of today as against the pagan inhumanities of the ancient world—the supreme value among earthly things of the human person, and of what is greatest in the person, the spirit—the mind, not in the narrow sense of the rationalists but as inclusive of all the ways to knowledge and reality: reason, faith, intuition, poetry, prayer. It holds that the purpose of civil society is the happiness of its members, of all its members alike; but it recognizes that that happiness can only be achieved through creative service, through making society a family. It upholds freedom from all tyrannies; but it recognizes that license is itself a tyranny, and that freedom and obedience to law, far from being incompatible, are but two aspects of the same thing, the life natural to man. It teaches that ultimately society is for the sake of the person, but that the person achieves his perfection and fulfilment through service of society; for it holds that man is born to be happy, but that happiness and selfishness are incompatible. It teaches that it is man's duty—and in a sane world would be his pleasure—to work creatively in and for the world as part of his worship of God: to work that the

world may become again a garden, wherein God may walk in the cool of the evening. In other words, it does offer precisely the fulfilment of our secular dreams, because it can make us whole by making us see and live, with the whole of our being and not just a part of it, the wholeness of the universe. We in the western world are fundamentally unhappy because for us Pan is dead. We live in a world of unrelated hostile atoms and therefore we are lonely, and loneliness is the stuff of hell. But the Incarnation means that Pan—the real Pan, the all-enfolding even though transcendent Totality, of which the pagan myth was an adumbration—is very much alive, though His victory is not yet complete, and “we are all one in that One.”

One hears people not infrequently nowadays speaking of the “betrayal of Christ by the churches.” They should speak rather of the betrayal of Christ and the Church by the Christians—though even so they would do well to remember that besides the ineffectiveness and cowardice and complacency of which we are only too conscious there is the miracle of the quiet humble goodness and fidelity of millions of ordinary men and women. The Church’s leadership does not betray Christ, though we sometimes betray by our blindness or sloth the Church’s leadership. One of the major issues which now confronts the postwar world is the problem of freedom and planning. The cry for planning is a cry for justice. We have seen too much of the evils which follow on *laissez-faire*, we have seen too much suffering and degradation brought about by competitive capitalism, to be able to acquiesce in these things any more. But is planning compatible with personal freedom? Is it not necessarily an invitation to totalitarianism? It is just here that we need a clarification of the meaning of freedom, and a firm definition of the essentials of human personal freedom. This the Church has given us with its statement of the complementary aspects of the human person as independent individual and as social unit, and of the fundamental rights of man with which no state control may legitimately interfere. The right to life, to creative work, to freedom of opinion and conscience, to the creation of a family, to property sufficient to make a setting for creativity, these things are the due of every man. But every

right implies a corresponding duty. These rights are necessary if we are to be whole men, but to be whole men means also to be members of a family, of the human family, and to serve God through serving it. From the promulgation of the papal *Workers' Charter* in the nineteenth century, through *Quadragesimo Anno* and *Divini Redemptoris*, the cry rings on, the cry to end the slavery of the masses, the cry to end the destructive enmities of the nations, the cry to restore the sanities and sanctities of national and international life, the cry to restore the grandeur and creativeness of the human person and the world of man. It is of course a revolution for which these papal appeals are calling, and they fell on deaf ears in a world which was self-complacent and assured. But today it is different. We have reached the depths, and unless we cling in blind panic to our complacency and our possessions, to the whole tottering structure of vested interests, and refuse to see what lies before our eyes, we may learn to acquire anew the awareness and humility which the sight should teach us and, having humility, be able still to hope. A world constructed and governed by reason alone will not bring happiness and peace, for such a world would have all the coldness and deadness and brutality of a machine. It would be organized, not organic. It would be law without life. It would cater for the collectivity rather than for the men and women who make up the collectivity. "Where there is no *vision* the people perish." Reason is dangerous and likely to be disastrous without its correlative, love. Rational knowledge is perfected in the love-knowledge we call vision, and must have the substance of vision to work upon if its planning is to save and not to enslave the world. But the vision which is above all necessary is the vision of the One, because without that there is no hope of integrating the isolated fragments of vision which experience of the world may have given us. That is why the absence of religion is the root cause of mental disease, and of the evils—personal, national, international—which follow from it. For disease is disintegration, and only a full awareness of and union with an infinite reality can suffice to integrate and fulfill the whole personality. We must be whole before we can hope to make whole. We must

build our own personality before we can hope to build an integral world.

In the early days of the war the British people were told: It all depends on *you*. What is true of the war is true of the peace. As long as we are willing, individually, to accept the assumptions of the prewar world, the assumptions of individualism, competitive capitalism, and scientific humanism, we cabin ourselves inescapably within a cycle of recurrent self-seeking, rivalry, war, hatred, revenge. That way there lies no peace. The first thing to change is the fragmentary manhood which post-Renaissance culture in the west has done its best to produce, and to grow again to the fullness of human stature. Where there is no vision the people perish, and all the efforts of politicians will not stop them. The reconstruction of the world waits upon the reconstruction of man.

The pattern of that reconstruction is not something that we need to set out to discover: it is written large in the Christian tradition and doctrine just as it is written large in the mythologies of the world. "Unless the grain of wheat, falling into the ground, die, itself remaineth alone . . ." Through baptism to rebirth; through death and the tomb to new life; through the way of purgation to the illuminative and finally the unitive way; through the deep integration of conscious with unconscious under the healing and unifying light and power of the grace of God; through prayer therefore, which is on our side the necessary complement and response to that re-creative and redeeming grace—these things all describe for us in different ways the journey we have to make, the way in which we may hope by losing our life to find it. And the first moment of this process is repentance and humility. There is no great art without reverence, and this is as true of the art of living and the art of statecraft as of painting or sculpture or music. St. Bernard tells us that we must start from fear so as to be led through the self-knowledge that comes of humility to the true love of God.

In 1941 the Dutch Reformed Church issued a pastoral from which we might well learn a lesson. "We have deserted," it said, "the only Lord and served other Gods in all sorts of ways . . . We have cherished our ideals and served them as

heathen serve their ideals, now the idea of a better society through an ever more ingenious application of the forces of nature, now that of a Utopia through the will and strength of the masses . . . Too often we do not wish to be reminded of the needs of others. We despise the poor and support the rich. We are careless in the practice of Christian charity. We have not fought strongly enough against the sins of the people as a whole and we have hardly testified against all kinds of social injustice and suppression.”⁴ If that spirit filled us all, and so led us on to true understanding and love, then indeed we might change the face of the world, for we should find the immense power brought to the world through the sacramental system operating through us without hindrance and transforming as it is meant to do not only ourselves but our environment too. We should find ourselves established, substantially at least, in integrity, because we should have decided once and for all the rival claims of a God-centered world and a self-centered world. We should be able to share fully in the redemptive activity of Christ in the world, because we should have found the vision and with it the love that knows no obstacles. “In the beginning was the Word”—but it was the *Verbum spirans amorem*, the Word from whom Love proceeds. A love which is separated from that Love is dangerous because it tends to idolatry and disruption. But the love that lives in Love is strong and deep and creative enough to embrace humanity and all reality and to conquer and transform the world, strong and deep enough to attempt the task of building on earth the city of God, that city whose stones are the living and indestructible spirits of men, set in place by the Artificer to a common purpose, and gladly joined without division or dissidence or rivalry in a common life of fulfilment and creation and worship whose source is the heart of Christ.

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⁴ Cf. Gerhard Leibholz: *Christianity, Politics, and Power* (The Sheldon Press, London, 1942), p. 65.

THE PLACE OF RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT IN SAINT THOMAS

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PROBLEMS WHICH A MODERN CONCEPTION OF RELIGIOUS
SENTIMENT PRESENTS TO THE THEOLOGIAN

IN 1917 Mr. Rudolph Otto, Protestant theological professor at the University of Marburg, published a work entitled *Das Heilige* (*The Idea of the Holy*).¹ In 1929 Mr. André Jundt presented a French translation of this work under the title *Le Sacré*.² This translation was made from the eighteenth German edition, then the most recent. By 1923 the work had been translated into English; in 1924 a Swedish translation appeared; in 1925 a Spanish one, and finally Italian and Japanese translations. As is indicated by this exceptional success for a book of this kind, the work fitted in with the needs of the times. The subject of religion was presenting a number of problems. Mr. Otto had a new solution to offer which seemed to be very satisfactory.

What precisely were these problems? In non-Catholic centers, recent researches into the history of religions and into religious psychology had brought about differences of opinion with regard to the origin and nature of religion. Mr. Otto presented a study on the very object of religion. In his opinion the surest way to settle the difficulties was to stake out clearly

¹ Rudolph Otto, *Das Heilige* * *Ueber das Irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationalem*, Gotha (Klotz): 1907. From the second edition (1923) on, the work was doubled; the supplements annexed to the preceding editions have formed an independent volume under the title, *Aufsätze, Das Numinose betreffend*, Gotha (Klotz): 1923. The references in this manuscript are to the translation made by John W. Harvey, professor of philosophy at Armstrong College, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, entitled *The Idea of the Holy* * *An Inquiry into the Non-rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational*, revised edition, pp. 239 + xx. Oxford University Press, London: 1936.

² *Le Sacré* * *L'élément non-rationnel dans l'idée du divin et sa relation avec le rationnel*, Payot, Paris: 1929.

the proper domain of religion.³ Then it would be easy, he thought, to determine the origin and nature of religion. This procedure was wise in so far as it was in conformity with the old Aristotelian principle of specifying the activities of the soul by their objects.⁴ Let us see in detail how Mr. Otto employed this principle. To follow his argumentation, we should become more aware of the actual proportions of the problems concerning religion.

Mr. Otto begins by avowing that the human mind realizes it must renounce its habitual procedures when trying to define clearly the object of religion.⁵ The religious man faces something mysterious, a reality which refuses to be placed in our ordinary categories. The intellect is incapable of defining the most fundamental and original data; it can only examine them.⁶ In this view, the object of religion is an irrational, unlike something which is unknown only scientifically (something which will be identified eventually). Nor is it like a secret reserved to the initiated. It is an ineffable entity. The whole concern of religion is to safeguard the integrity of this ineffable entity. The domain of religion begins at the point where it coincides with mystery.⁷

How can one reach this mystery? By the feelings which this reality stimulates in us.⁸ But on this matter we must try to

³ "... if there be any single domain of human experience that presents us with something unmistakably specific and unique, peculiar to itself, assuredly it is that of the religious life" (Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, p. 4).

⁴ *Summa Theologiae*, III, q. 19, a. 1, ad 3um.

⁵ "The reader is invited to direct his mind to a moment of deeply-felt religious experience, as little as possible qualified by other forms of consciousness. Whoever cannot do this, whoever knows no such moments in his experience, is requested to read no further; for it is not easy to discuss questions of religious psychology with one who ... cannot recall any intrinsically religious feelings" (Otto, *op. cit.*, p. 8).

⁶ "This mental state is perfectly *sui generis* and irreducible to any other; and therefore, like every absolutely primary and elementary datum, while it admits of being discussed, it cannot be strictly defined" (*Ibid.*, p. 7).

⁷ "[The] non-rational or supra-rational Subject [the object of religion] eludes the conceptual way of understanding" (*Ibid.*, p. 2).

⁸ On page 8 of his work, Dr. Otto begins his analysis of "The Elements in the 'Numinous'" by denying the value of intellectual analysis of this object. That is why he limits his readers to those who can attain the "Numinous" by the only way possible, namely, religious feelings.

understand Mr. Otto, not reach our own conclusions. For him, feeling is the summit of knowledge. Feeling brings us into contact with superior realities. Like touch with regard to material things, feeling tells us that eternal realities are at hand and gives us an immediate and certain, although obscure, knowledge of them. On the other hand, the attainments of feeling cannot be conceived, for as notions of value they embrace irrational elements as soon as they appear in the field of knowledge. Thus the only way to understand the object lies in analyzing how consciousness reacts when faced with this object, especially at the moments of most intense emotion.⁹ We can see from this that it is necessary to distinguish two stages in knowing the object of religion. We enter into contact with it by intuition, and its *existence* will be corroborated by the feelings which arise in us. But to isolate its profound *nature*, it is necessary to have recourse to introspection. This will reveal its nature to us through the tonality of sentiments which this mysterious reality causes us to experience.¹⁰ Let us now see how Mr. Otto conforms to this twofold procedure when he details his researches.

First he establishes the word which most properly characterizes this experience. The word "sacred" seems suitable. But we must restore the primitive meaning of this word, that is, the meaning it had when it was strictly applied to the domain of religion. Today "sacred" signifies that which is "the absolute moral attribute, denoting the consummation of moral goodness." According to Mr. Otto, this is an evolved and degraded meaning.¹¹ By taking on this ethical sense, the word "sacred" was rationalized and deprived of a part of its original content. The final result of this gradual schematization is the fact that the word no longer corresponds to an

⁹ Cf. note 8.

¹⁰ " . . . the nature of the numinous can only be suggested by means of the special way in which it is reflected in the mind in terms of feeling. "Its nature is such that it grips or stirs the human mind with this and that determinate affective state" (*Op. cit.*, p. 12; cf. also pp. 8 and 9).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

original and clearly specific feeling. Moreover, Mr. Otto suggests designating the object of his reactions during the moments of religious emotion by the word "numinous."¹² This word, unlike the term "sacred," has preserved a strictly religious signification—something like the word "Qādôsh" in Semitic religions.

Even this word does not satisfy Mr. Otto. For him it is merely the least improper for designating his experiences. He notes, however, that this very inability to find an adequate expression for characterizing religious sentiment shows how much complexity and irreducibility there is in this sentiment. Moreover, from this time on he sees the numinous as an entirely separate category.¹³ That is why he immediately considers what religious feeling has in common with the states of purely moral exaltation, and what additional solemnity and violent impression it alone implies.

He begins his consideration by interrogating his religious consciousness. What first comes to the surface for analysis is the idea that religious feeling is related to a feeling of dependence.¹⁴ However, religious feeling is accompanied by such a violent emotion that one must be on guard lest he should confuse it with related feelings of humility. It is a "creature-consciousness."¹⁵ The decisive, specific element is prostration, effacement not only before a sovereign power as such, but before an "overpowering might."¹⁶ There is a difference not only of degree, but also of quality.¹⁷

However, to note Mr. Otto, this "creature-feeling" teaches us nothing directly bearing upon the object. It is rather a reaction of the subject, something concomitant or consequent

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ On page 9, Dr. Otto refutes Schleiermacher's denial of the relation between religious feeling and a feeling of dependence.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 10 and 13.

¹⁷ "[Schleiermacher's] mistake is in making the distinction merely that between 'absolute' and 'relative' dependence, and therefore a difference of degree and not of intrinsic quality" (*Ibid.*, p. 9).

upon the impression caused by the object.¹⁸ The violent impression which is experienced precedes, in us, the prostration of our being which results from this impression. First the object causes in us a feeling of terror.¹⁹ One succeeds in penetrating little by little the nature of the object which arouses the original emotion (the "numinous") only by studying the tonality of the original emotion.²⁰ Again, Mr. Otto warns us that it is necessary to renounce the hope of arriving at a definition of this object. From the feeling of terror which this object arouses in us, Mr. Otto deduces that it is a mystery which makes one shudder.²¹ From that point, always by a more profound analysis of religious feelings, he tries to place a limit on whatever each of the diverse elements perceived in the "numinous" implies to be ineffable.

What is the quality of the terror aroused by the numinous object? To describe it, Mr. Otto has recourse to a Biblical expression "emät Jahweh," the fear of God. We must consider it as a dread or an intense horror, having a paralyzing effect.²² Nothing created can inspire such fright. Mr. Otto qualifies this state with the words "feeling of 'something uncanny.'" ²³ However, here again it is not a matter of the highest degree of fear, anguish, or dread, but rather a feeling of an entirely different quality. It is a feeling which is purified in the case of the saint, and is transformed into a very noble emotion rendering the soul silent and making it tremble in its very depths.

Finally let us note that what provokes this "mystical fright" is the "absolute unapproachability" of the numinous object. What arouses the subjective reaction, the "creature-consciousness," is the perception of the "absolute superiority . . . [in] power" of the object.²⁴

Having finished this analysis, Mr. Otto tries to consider the other element of the numinous, the element of mystery ("mys-

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

terium"). The element of the awful ("tremendum"), compared with the element of mystery, is accessory and even accidental.²⁵ It can happen that the religious feeling will not include any dread, but it always contains astonishment. Since this is not as yet admiration, we must add another element. At first, the mystery appears not as something to be admired ("admirandum"), but as something to be wondered at ("mirum"), something wonderful ("mirabile").²⁶ Here again we must guard against making a mistake. We must be careful to use only the expression which most properly characterizes the quality of the sentiments which we experience. The astonishment which is experienced when one comes into contact with the numinous has the property of being a sort of stupor. It causes a surprise which paralyzes us. We remain absolutely dumbfounded.²⁷ The explanation for this lies in the fact that the thing to be wondered at ("mirum"), impressing us as it does at this point, recovers the primitive and exclusively religious meaning which it possessed at first. The numinous is not only something secret, something not understood, something unexplained; it is in its full sense "the 'wholly other,'" a reality which by its very nature is absolutely incommensurable. Before this "wholly other" I fall back, seized with stupor.²⁸

The original feeling experienced in our contacts with the numinous object is one of unspeakable horror, and it is felt while we remain wholly dumbfounded. To account for this experience, it is vain to have recourse to sentiments of love, friendliness, and other analogous representations of reason.²⁹ The mystery seduces us, draws us, fascinates us.³⁰ We feel

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.25-6.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.26.

²⁷ "... the *emāt* of Yahweh . . . , which Yahweh can pour forth . . . seizes upon a man with paralyzing effect" (p. 14).

²⁸ "... the natural man is quite unable even to shudder . . . or feel horror in the real sense of the word" (p. 15). "... the essential characteristic [of religious feeling] . . . lies . . . in . . . the *stupor* before something 'wholly other' . . ." (p. 27).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

ourselves drawn towards this object with all the weight of our being, which remains seized with fright. The numinous appears suddenly as a fascinating mystery ("mysterium fascinans"). It is an inexpressible feeling. Even the greatest mystics have confessed that they were unable to push the analysis further.⁸¹

Mr. Otto ends his introspective researches at this point. From now on he will conduct another search—a search in which he will try to find justifications for his statements on the numinous in the history of religions. This second part of his work has very little interest for us. It is more important to follow out the detail of Mr. Otto's analyses and to form a synthesis of the data collected up to this point. In this way we shall better see the problems which this conception of religious sentiment places before Catholic theology.

First let us note the order of generation in religious sentiment, how it originates and develops in us. According to Mr. Otto, the numinous object arouses in us first a feeling of fright. The fright becomes stupor inasmuch as we perceive how much this reality is beyond our grasp or conception. This realization occurs at the moment when we become conscious of the fact that we are ourselves moving towards the "wholly other." Because we remain paralyzed, dumbfounded from astonishment, we gradually feel an irresistible attraction for the numinous. This object has appeared in signal splendor in spite of its absolute "superiority . . . [in] power." The numinous is thereby successively revealed, first as something awful ("tremendum"), then as an awful mystery ("mysterium tremendum"), and finally as an awful and fascinating mystery ("mysterium tremendum et fascinans"). As noted before,

⁸¹ "The greatest mystics" to whom Dr. Otto makes reference are mystics of various creeds. The author cites the statements of various mystics, but names only a few of them. For example, he quotes St. Catherine of Genoa: "O that I could tell you what the heart feels, how it burns and is consumed inwardly! Only, I find no words to express it. I can but say: Might but one little drop of what I feel fall into Hell, Hell would be transformed into a Paradise" (Otto, *op. cit.*, p. 38). On page 39 of the same work, the author quotes a Buddhist mystic who says about Nirvana, "Bliss—unspeakable."

Mr. Otto finds an order among these diverse elements. The numinous object would be a mystery containing two elements: one repulsive, the other attractive. Religious sentiment would be the fulfilment of emotions successively experienced through our contacts with this reality. Evidently this fulfilment would be a very complex state since it would contain the following elements:

The Qualitative Content of the Numinous:	{ Form: the mystery ("mysterium"), the "wholly other"	
	Elements:	{ Repulsive: "awful majesty" ("majestas tremenda") Attractive: "fascination" ("fascinans")
The Religious Feeling Which It Arouses:	{ Fundamentally: a feeling of stupor	
		{ originating in a feeling of fright developing into a feeling of fascination

That remains a schema. The synthesis of Mr. Otto's conception which this schema presents should be interpreted with all the nuances which we have tried to bring out in analyzing his work.

Can this conception satisfy a Catholic theologian? By proposing the problem of the origin and nature of religion, this book brings our relations with God into question.

Is it right to reduce religion to a matter of feeling, as Mr. Otto does? If not, what place does feeling occupy in religion? On the other hand, to what extent is it true that our relations with God begin in fright, remain in stupor, and finally expand in love? This would mean that God successively reveals Himself to the soul under a threefold aspect: first as absolutely sovereign in power, then as absolutely unapproachable, and finally as having a unique splendor and fascination.

These are the problems which we shall try to resolve by ascertaining the true place of religious feeling in St. Thomas' theology. We do not have to pursue our studies from any other source, since we are confident that we shall find the most faithful interpretation and formulation of the thought of the Church in St. Thomas' synthesis.

SOLUTION TO THESE PROBLEMS AS OFFERED BY ST. THOMAS IN
HIS THEOLOGICAL SYNTHESIS

St. Thomas touches upon the problem of our relations with God in several places throughout his works. He has even a special and complete treatise on Religion in his *Summa Theologiae*. In the very first article of this treatise,³² he says that it is proper to the virtue of religion to regulate our relations with God, for "it consists only in the order to God." One who reads St. Thomas' considerations on the subject of religion after having analyzed the study of Mr. Rudolph Otto is truly surprised to find a similarity in terminology between these two authors. This terminological similarity is so striking that at first sight one would be tempted to establish relations between the two doctrines and conclude that they are perfectly in conformity. But we must consider the matter more closely. We shall begin by a critical analysis of St. Thomas' vocabulary as compared with that of Mr. Otto. In this way we shall be able to note how far the conceptions of St. Thomas and Mr. Otto agree, and how far they differ. In proceeding thus, we shall follow the method dear to St. Thomas, for he always penetrates the nature of things by a preliminary and attentive study of the words—to pass, as he says, from the nominal definition (the "quid nominis") to the real (the "quid rei").³³

Similarities in terminology

The work that we are undertaking embraces two stages. First, we shall review the vocabulary which St. Thomas uses in his considerations on religion. Then we shall try to reconstruct the theological context in which St. Thomas' expressions should receive their authentic interpretation.

Since St. Thomas' religious vocabulary is large and varied, it would require too much time to make a complete and detailed review of it. We shall limit our consideration to the terminology that he uses when touching upon the specific problems of the

³² *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 1, c. ³³ *Ibid.*, I, q. 18, a. 1, c.

nature and origin of our relations with God. We shall proceed by placing beside each of the words used by Mr. Otto the equivalent words in St. Thomas. The references are to those works of St. Thomas in which these problems are treated as such. First among these are the *Summa Theologiae* and the *Commentary on Peter Lombard's Book of Sentences*.

The expression used most frequently by Mr. Otto is that of "religious feeling." With regard to this term, St. Thomas speaks of "reverence" and "reverential affection."³⁴ Mr. Otto says that religious feeling is fundamentally a "feeling of stupor." St. Thomas, too, seems to identify reverence with a fear, for he speaks of "reverential fear"³⁵ or "filial fear,"³⁶ which he distinguishes from "servile fear," "the fear of punishment."

Mr. Otto resolves this feeling of stupor into two elements: the feeling originates in fright, then develops into fascination. In regard to reverential fear (filial fear), St. Thomas speaks of a twofold movement: on the one hand "the flight of adequation," on the other, "the flight of separation."³⁷ This is a complex affective state combining love and submission in relation to a Being upon Whom one realizes he must depend for all things. St. Thomas often calls this state "love of excellence" or, more frequently, "the friendship of superabundance."³⁸

According to Mr. Otto, the fright with which God inspires us causes in us a profound feeling of dependence which he calls "creature-consciousness"—a sort of unique dejection which we experience only before an "overpowering might." St. Thomas uses analogous expressions, seemingly for the same purpose. In his judgment, our fear of God is that which every creature experiences when he realizes God's majesty and becomes conscious of the infinite distance which separates him from God. St. Thomas adds that at these moments we have

³⁴ *Ibid.*, III, q. 7, a. 6, c.

³⁵ *Q. D. de Spe.*, q. 1, a. 4, ad 2um.

³⁶ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 19, a. 9, c.

³⁷ *Q. D. de Ver.*, q. 28, a. 4, ad 4um.

³⁸ *In VIII Ethic.*, lect. 7, n. 1625.

no other desire than to efface ourselves in our smallness—"sinking into our own poorness" or "recoiling into our own smallness."³⁹

The reason why the sacred inspires us with such feelings lies in the fact that in our contacts with God He reveals Himself as a mystery, something "wholly other." He presents Himself under the irreducible aspects, first of an "awful majesty," then as "fascinating." This is Mr. Otto's teaching.⁴⁰ St. Thomas states the same in equivalent terms. According to him, our feelings of reverence increase as we know God more. Our reverential fear, far from diminishing, increases according to the proportion of our knowing and loving God. It is when knowledge and love increase that God seems to us to be less accessible, to be ineffable, incomprehensible, and of such excellence and majesty that He transcends every possible comparison.⁴¹

As yet we are not concerned about furnishing the definitive interpretation of St. Thomas' vocabulary on the question concerning religion; we want only to reconstruct the context in which it should be interpreted, to discover the place religion occupies in St. Thomas' theology.

To perceive this clearly, we must first ask what conception St. Thomas had of theology. For him theology was "a cer-

³⁹ *Q. D. de Spe*, q. 1, a. 4, ad 2um.

⁴⁰ "The qualitative *content* of the numinous experience, to which 'the mysterious' stands as *form*, is in one of its aspects the element of daunting 'awefulness' and 'majesty,' which has already been dealt with in detail; but it is clear that it has at the same time another aspect, in which it shows itself as something uniquely attractive and *fascinating*. . . . The daemonic-divine object may appear to the mind an object of horror and dread, but at the same time it is no less something that allures with a potent charm, and the creature, who trembles before it, utterly cowed and cast down, has always at the same time the impulse to turn to it, nay even to make it somehow his own. . . . It may well be possible, it is even probable, that in the first stage of its development the religious consciousness started with only one of its poles—the 'daunting' aspect of the numen. . . . But the process does not end [even with the attempt 'to appropriate the prodigious force of the numen for the natural ends of man']. Possession of and by the numen becomes an end in itself; it begins to be sought for its own sake. . ." (Otto, *op. cit.*, p. 31).

⁴¹ *III Sent.*, d. XXXIV, q. 2, quæst. 4, sol. 4a.

tain impression of divine knowledge in us," a sort of anticipated participation in God's own knowledge.⁴² In this light, theology as a science is an attempt to organize revealed data according to the demands of the Aristotelian concept of science. The need for such a science is founded in our very human nature, in so far as our intellects must cogitate on the obscure certitudes which faith presents.⁴³ Since theology is born from faith and develops under the light of faith, this science should result in a more intense, more vital, and more loving faith in God.⁴⁴ One can conceive it as an attempt to penetrate the data of faith—an attempt which is always begun, but never completed. The purpose of this attempt is to obtain a fuller understanding of the truths of faith. It is incumbent upon theology to bring out the demands of our faith, to show the new attitudes which man must have in his relations with God. Theology must make clear what relations we should have with God in the light of what He reveals to us, both with regard to Himself and with regard to us.

From this consideration we can understand what place St. Thomas assigns to religion in his theology. After showing what God has taught us about Himself, His intimate Life, and His free initiatives in regard to us (this consideration shows how we emanate from God), St. Thomas starts immediately to show very carefully how God invites us to return to Him. In this section of his theology, the Angelic Doctor first determines the end of this road back to God. Then he marks the principal stages: each step we must take in order to progress towards knowing and loving Him better—until the Day when we shall see Him as He is and grasp Him in a definitive manner.

In this light, the twofold theme of procession from God through creation and of return to Him permits St. Thomas to organize all the data of our faith coherently and organically. It is quite surprising to see that St. Thomas discovers relations of causality and necessity among facts as contingent as our

⁴² *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 1, a. 3, ad 2um.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 2, a. 1, c.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, a. 10, c.

creation, fall, and redemption. These are purely free actions on both God's part and ours. How can they be matter for science, which has to do only with what is necessary? That could lead us astray. Let us indicate that St. Thomas is guided by one principle in his penetration of revealed truths: the supernatural is placed in a subject (namely, man) whose nature it is to perfect, not destroy. Thus St. Thomas always sees a continuity between the work of nature and the work of grace. Grace surpasses nature by extending it. Grace is thereby a gift and a requisite. It answers a need of human nature. In the light of this principle St. Thomas enlarges a full theological context by undertaking an attentive study of our nature, its mechanisms, its fundamental tendencies, and its most basic needs. He does this to show what grace contributes. In noting the necessities and desires of our nature, St. Thomas perceives the unspeakable order implied by the different facts of our redemption. Redemption is continuous with creation. Both manifest God's infinite mercy.

Let us make a closer examination of St. Thomas' procedure in treating of our return to God. In this way we shall better understand the place which religion occupies in his theology. First he groups the revelations of our faith which have to do with two primary and therefore most important facts. Then he draws out the consequent attitudes of the soul which must be adopted if we are to enter the one and only path which leads back to God. The two primary facts are the following: first, that we are born as sinners, that is, in revolt against God. This is the state of a will frustrated in its attempt to pursue its end by itself—a desperate state in which man is totally unable to ordain himself to God again. The second fact is that God, moved by an infinite pity towards our miserable condition decided to pardon us by an unheard-of act of mercy. God has called us to share in His own Life. Since our offense is infinite, our redemption can be accomplished only by God Himself. His Son took this mission upon Himself, and thanks to Him, we have been called to share divine Life even here on earth. Christ led a supernaturalized human life which serves

as a model teaching us how we are to pursue our new goal. These facts imply many consequences which bear directly upon our lives. This is why St. Thomas details everything which our faith says is necessary for attaining the possession of God and for enjoying eternal friendship with Him.

To attain such an end each of our acts must be supernatural. We must live here on earth as God's sons, God's friends. Our intellects must think only in God's light; our wills must love according to God's measure, God's motives and order. To reach eternal union with God, our intellects, our wills, and all the other principles of our activity must be supernaturalized (since by their very natures they are indeterminate); that is, they must be oriented to and fixed in a stable preference for the supernatural good. St. Thomas concludes from this that they must all be perfected by supernatural virtues, since "virtue makes good both the operation (that is, in conformity with the demands of our end), and the operator."

Moreover, in order to fix us in God, the supernatural virtues reestablish order in us. The work of grace is to heal and then to raise to the supernatural order. This first work of grace is proper to the two moral virtues of temperance and fortitude operating under the direct influence of charity, thus establishing interior peace and uniting our being firmly to God. However, in order to live an integrally supernatural life, we must also have supernatural relations with our neighbors. The supernatural virtue of justice, also moving under the influence of charity, stabilizes us in relation to our neighbors, makes us respect their rights, and moves us to pay our debts to them. The term "our neighbors" applies not only to equals, but also to inferiors and superiors. Among the last mentioned, God has the pre-eminent place. The virtue of religion regulates our relations to Him. From this we see that St. Thomas classifies a complete section of our attitudes under the name of religion—attitudes which are prescribed by our faith as absolutely necessary if we desire to reach Him and to succeed in possessing Him.

Up to this point nothing very precise has been established,

but we have at hand a general context for sake of reference. We shall need this general context when we compare the conceptions of St. Thomas with those of Mr. Otto. Already we can see that, beneath seemingly similar and closely related words, greatly varying approaches to our relations with God are hidden.

Differences in conception

The origin and nature of our relations with God depend upon the way in which we conceive God. The history of religions demonstrates the truth of this statement. We can easily establish the fact that religion has progressed in purity and spirituality as man has arrived at more exact notions of God. On the other hand, religion has been degraded even into superstition when dominated by gross conceptions about God.⁴⁵ Too, this is the history of every individual man. If one conceives God falsely, with prejudice, his relations with God soon deviate and degenerate fatally into superstitions of all sorts.⁴⁶ However, if a man consents to the correction of his natural notions of God by faith, his religion is expanded and spiritualized proportionately.

Up to this point, we have established similarities and have marked apparent relationships between Mr. Otto's conception of religion and that of St. Thomas. However, we have not gone beyond the realm of psychological description, in which we have noted a number of similarities in the vocabularies used by each author. Now we must penetrate their doctrines and try to find: first, how each doctrine conceives God; then, at what concept of religion each doctrine arrives, in the light of the preceding concept of God.

Diverse conceptions of the divine

It would be more exact to speak of diverse conceptions with regard to our capacity to know God. Mr. Otto departs from

⁴⁵ A. Lemonnier, *La Revelation primitive et les données actuelles de la science* (Paris: 1914), pp. 21-67.

⁴⁶ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 85, a. 1, c.

St. Thomas less on the *manner* of conceiving God than on the very *possibility* of conceiving Him. We shall consider first Mr. Otto's teaching.

The possibility of knowing God here on earth is not considered as such in the book, *The Idea of the Holy*. Mr. Otto considers that his solution to this problem is presupposed in the psychological description which he elaborates in regard to the origin and nature of religious sentiment. Too, if he suggests this solution, he does so only occasionally, and never with all the explanations one would desire. We have mentioned his principal statements in this regard. His work leaves no doubt about the positions he has adopted in this problem; but again we have one regret—namely, that he has taken so little care to justify these positions in the eyes of the reader. For our part, let us try to find the obvious meaning of the aforementioned texts. We shall immediately see what consequences they imply.

We know already that for Mr. Otto religion consists in "an experience of mystery."⁴⁷ However, for him the "mysterious . . . is that which lies altogether outside what can be thought, and is alike in form, quality, and essence, the utterly and 'wholly other.'"⁴⁸ The existence of this inaccessible, unspeakable reality, which he makes an "irrational," is known only by the feelings which mystery inspires. It is a mystery which simultaneously fills us with stupor and fascinates us. The ideas we pretend to have about God and His attributes are only conceptual representations of what we feel. They are mere schematizations of subjective states.⁴⁹ "They are not intellectual concepts properly so called, but something which resembles concepts, *ideograms*, *pure signs* which indicate a particular element of religious experience."⁵⁰ They are not intended to express the divine.⁵¹ The great error (according to Mr. Otto) has been to believe that they "used to exhaust the essence of deity,"⁵² to "transfer" these "'natural' attri-

⁴⁷ R. Otto, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 145-6.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁵² *Ibid.*

butes, which ought only to be used as 'ideograms' for what is itself properly beyond utterance, to the non-rational as real qualifications of it," and to

mistake symbolic expressions of feelings for adequate concepts upon which a "scientific" structure of knowledge may be based.⁵³ . . . we have to predicate them of a subject which they qualify, but which in its deeper essence *is not, nor indeed can be, comprehended in them*.⁵⁴ All this [that is, the manifestation of the effects of religious feeling] teaches us the independence of the positive content of this experience from the implications of its overt conceptual expression, and how it can be firmly grasped, thoroughly understood, and profoundly appreciated, purely in, with, and from the feeling itself.⁵⁵

In spite of that, Mr. Otto pretends to preserve a certain value for our notions about God. Without being necessary for religion, these conceptualizations can be useful, on the condition that they preserve only a purely representative value.

By being steeped in and saturated with rational elements [a religion] . . . is guarded from sinking into fanaticism or mere mysticity, or at least from persisting in these. . . .⁵⁶

If Mr. Otto's conceptions were more precise, they would remind us of what St. Thomas has to say about the experience of the mystics. The Angelic Doctor admits that by the exercise of the gift of wisdom, the saints arrive at a certain experience of God. Their charity makes them so conformed to God that they come to the point of judging about God and His Revelation by connaturality. The gift of wisdom permits them to taste, to savor God, to have an affective knowledge about Him. According to St. Thomas, faith tends to loving vision of God in order to dissipate the obscurities in which faith lives. In this very precise case, St. Thomas admits that the potencies of loving penetrate further into the mystery of God than the potencies of knowing.

Mr. Otto carelessly neglects to distinguish between the case of the mystics and the case of souls whose interior life is not as

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

yet sufficiently under the domination of the Holy Spirit. Erroneous conclusions can be drawn from Mr. Otto's statements as they are formulated. Their principal error is that the reader is led to the conviction that God is not an object of knowledge, but only of feeling. To speak of God is too precise; it is to yield to a concept. For Mr. Otto, the category of the "sacred" is anterior to everything else. The "wholly other" is an unspeakable object which can come to us only by impressing us. When this impression occurs, an absolutely original relation between our being and the transcendent mystery is established. The idea of God translates this relation into symbols.

These symbols, Mr. Otto insists, have no objective value. Their value is only extrinsic and arbitrary, providing a subjective resonance for the person who uses them—a resonance which varies for each one according to his own experience of the sacred. We can see, then, that they remain mere conceptual representations of an affective state, a formulation in language which is more or less exact—language which is full of equivocations. This language refers each state to sentiments of varying tonalities, results of an introspection of our own religious experiences.

This theory not only contains misleading expressions; it is equivalent to an open confession that we are totally incapable of knowing God, of attaining Him as He is. One who holds this theory is no longer sure that God exists. It is impossible to know Him; God escapes our knowledge. It is true that I can feel Him; but tomorrow if my emotions are dry, the sacred will leave me indifferent and in complete doubt about its very existence. The less fortunate may never feel it. What value can they give to my testimony? In vain shall I insist with the utmost conviction that I feel that the sacred exists. That insistence cannot force these less fortunate to adhere to my statement or furnish them means of verifying my assertions.

Fundamentally such a symbolism is only a *disguised agnosticism*. Sacred Scripture uses symbols and metaphors, but the

purpose and the meaning of symbols and metaphors in Sacred Scripture are quite different from those of Mr. Otto. In each case, the context guards us against stopping at the image; it moves us to go beyond the symbol or metaphor and to penetrate the truth the Scripture suggests. According to St. Thomas' explanation,⁵⁷ the sacred authors have recourse to symbolism only to help us to rise to the knowledge of divine things; these authors always take care to use familiar and current images and to make clear that their use is symbolical. As we shall see further on, the procedure in this case has no end other than to give the analogical knowledge which we can have of God in the most comprehensible terms. On the other hand, to reduce our knowledge about God to simple "ideograms," which have only a subjective and arbitrary value, as Mr. Otto does, is to say that our means of expressing God are false, in every sense. Or it is to say that they signify nothing objective, and therefore furnish no teaching on God which would have any value. It seems that Mr. Otto urges us to express God on a basis of experience in order to console us in our very inability to *know* God. If we follow Mr. Otto's method, we shall remain no less ignorant about God, for our symbols do not grasp God in any way.

From this we can see how Mr. Otto's "religion" deviates. Since this "religion" is no longer proportionate to our knowledge about God, but rather originates and evolves according to the rhythm of our feelings, it can soon degenerate into a mere sentimentalism, or remain as religious impressionism. That would not surprise us, for what other natural result can come from a conception of religion which holds that "every dogma which tries to resolve religious mysteries into concepts not only works in vain; it is moreover brutal and barbarous"?⁵⁸

To disengage the characteristic notes of St. Thomas' analogism, let us consider first the error of the agnostics. Ordinarily, an agnostic reasons in this way: on the one hand, God

⁵⁷ *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 1, a. 9, ad 2um.

⁵⁸ R. Otto, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

is above all genera and species, He transcends every mode of being. Moreover, we know nothing except what is, and define only through genera and species. Therefore, we can conclude to nothing except that God is wholly inaccessible.

This argument is not entirely false. It was elaborated as a reaction against the error of *anthropomorphism* and its false pretensions. Chief among these pretensions is that there are only differences of degree between creatures and God; in this way anthropomorphism pretends to define God. As opposed to this error, Mr. Otto, along with all the other agnostics, is certainly right when he protests against what he calls "the rationalization of the Unspeakable." It is certainly true that the notions which we use to express God *do not define Him*. The error of the agnostic lies in going too far and in refusing to admit a statement which has something absolutely *positive*, although not defined: namely, God is the Source. St. Thomas argues from this statement: if God is the Source, will He not possess what the streams contain, under some form (*according to some analogy*)? This is a happy solution in that it respects both the demands of God and the demands of our minds.

Agnosticism is a resignation to absolute ignorance about God; anthropomorphism claims that it knows *everything* about God. St. Thomas gives us humbler and truer words. He declares that we can know God; he confesses, on the other hand, that we cannot express Him as He is.⁵⁹

Evidently the question concerns our capacity for knowing God while we are here on earth. To this capacity St. Thomas devotes the last two articles of the question in the *Summa* in which he treats of our way of knowing God.⁶⁰ These articles furnish all the clarifications necessary for understanding the following question, which has to do with the names that we must use if we are to speak correctly about God.⁶¹ What we have to say will be only a literal exposition of the principles which St. Thomas clarifies in these articles. In such a delicate

⁵⁹ *I Cont. Gent.*, 28 and 29.

⁶⁰ *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 12, a. 12, c.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, q. 13.

matter, we are interested in holding to the very letter of St. Thomas. We want to discover the smallest details in his thought—in the very texts where he exposes this thought.

St. Thomas asks, "How far can our reason go in its attempt to know God here on earth?" Thus the problem is well circumscribed in its data. It is the question of man's opportunities here on earth, and not of the conditions which will be given to him in heaven. This latter part was treated in the first eleven articles. Then, too, it is a matter of attaining God only by the resources of human reason. The following article deals with the possibilities offered by grace.⁶² To the question about man's natural capacity to know God, St. Thomas gives the following answer: all our knowledge comes from the senses, which limit us in learning about God. Since sensible realities are effects, the being of which depends upon their cause, from their very existence we can conclude to the existence of God, their only true cause. However, since they are not adequate effects of God Who is infinite by nature and therefore incommunicable, sensible realities cannot manifest to us all of God's power; nor can they reveal the divine nature or essence. For this reason we are reduced to the state of not knowing what God is, and of attributing to Him only what His dignity as universal cause of all perfection demands.⁶³

In this light we should attribute all the perfection which we discover on our natural plane of knowledge to God as to their cause. Realizing that things are good, we can conclude that God is good. But what precise meaning does the word "good" have when it is applied to God? What do the attribute of goodness and all the other attributes demanded in the capacity

⁶² *Ibid.*, q. 12, a. 12, c.

⁶³ "Dicendum quod naturalis nostra cognitio a sensu principium sumit. . . . Ex sensibilibus autem non potest usque ad hoc intellectus noster pertingere quod divinam essentiam videat; quia creaturae sensibiles sunt effectus Dei virtutem causae non adaequantes. Unde ex sensibilibus cognitione non potest . . . Dei . . . essentia videri. Sed quia sunt eius effectus a causa dependentes, ex eis in hoc perducere possumus . . . ut cognoscamus de ipso ea quae necesse est ei convenire secundum quod est prima omnium causa, excedens omnia sua causata" (*Ibid.*).

of the first cause, which is God, teach concerning God's nature? St. Thomas gives an answer to this problem—an answer which completes what he told us about our natural capacities for concluding to God's existence by way of causality. For this answer, we refer to the second article of the following question.⁶⁴ St. Thomas concludes:

when, therefore, one says: God is good, the meaning is not: God is the cause of goodness; nor: God is not bad; but the meaning is: what we call goodness in creatures pre-exists in God in a superior way.

For in order that God may be the cause of goodness, it is necessary not only that He be not bad but also that goodness pre-exist in Him according to a superior mode. Therefore, when one says that God is good, it means that He is the universal good, not this or that particular good.⁶⁵ But what is goodness in God, and consequently, what is the divine nature which we understand when we say that God is good *in an eminent way*?

In the light of what has been said, we can attribute to God goodness and all the other perfections which we discover in the universe, for He is the only cause which can account for the existence of all these perfections. Moreover, in a certain way at least, every effect is similar to its cause. Therefore, before limiting our possibilities and inabilities to express God, we must know exactly in what sense God is the universal cause of all things, and, consequently, in what measure creatures are similar to Him.

We must be prudent in this matter. Anthropomorphism considers God as a *higher species* of the genus "being," which genus includes both uncreated and created being. Moreover, pantheism considers God as a *genus* entering into the composition of every created being. In this latter case, God is reduced to the rank of *formal cause* in everything; He is the necessary component of every being. In the former case,

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, q. 13, a. 2, c.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

although God is not a particular cause, He is a *general cause*; but He is of the *same nature* as His creatures. St. Thomas is careful to avoid these errors. He warns us that God has no generic or specific relation with created being.⁶⁶ God is a *transcendent principle*, above every category, even that of being. For God possesses every perfection in its fullness; His effects have only a certain likeness with Him, "much as the natures of lower bodies represent the power of the sun."⁶⁷

This conclusion leads St. Thomas to distinguish three kinds of likeness. He states that since likeness is a participation in the same form, this participation can be realized *according to the same nature and the same mode*. An example of this is the participation between every particular univocal cause and its effect—a perfect likeness which is called specific resemblance. This participation can be realized, too, according to one same nature and *different modes*. This kind gives a generic resemblance, such as exists, for example, between a general cause and a particular effect. In this case there is only a difference of degree. This is the kind of resemblance the anthropomorphists attribute to God and His creatures, as though they belonged to the same genus of being. Finally, the participation in the same form can be realized *according to different natures*. In this case, there is only an *analogical resemblance*.⁶⁸ This is the case of every creature in relation to God, for the creature resembles God only in so far as it is a being, and, therefore, in so far as it is like the first and universal principle of all being.⁶⁹

Let us bring together all the data we have accumulated with regard to our possibilities for knowing God. Starting with sensible creatures, we can come to know that God *exists* and that in Him pre-exist all perfections which we find in these sensible creatures, but according to a higher mode. Up to this point St. Thomas has conceded only the power to know

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Cfr. *ibid.*, q. 4, a. 3, c.

⁶⁹ "illa quae sunt a Deo, assimilantur ei in quantum sunt entia, ut primo et universali principio totius esse" (*Ibid.*).

the *existence* of God and of all perfections in Him. The question of knowing what constitutes God's nature and the nature of His perfections has not come up as yet. However, this question is implicit in what has been said up to now. How is it possible to arrive at the knowledge of the nature of a transcendent cause from the nature of equivocal effects? The answer to this will become clear if we inquire into the names that we can use in speaking of God and the measure in which we can be sure that these names express Him.

There are three kinds of names that we can use in speaking of God, but they must be used with diverse precautions. Since we attribute to God every perfection that can be attributed to a creature, *according to a higher mode*, every name which implies a perfection without including any modality can be applied *both to God and to creatures*. Such names will be *common* to God and creatures. Thus we attribute knowledge to God because the word "knowledge" is abstracted from every special mode of knowledge and thereby logically transcendent. On the contrary, every name which implies the imperfection of any created mode cannot be applied to God, except through metaphor. An example of this can be found in the expressions, "God sees," "God hears," "God becomes angry." Finally, every name which has the indication of the transcendent mode proper to God in its very meaning will play the role of a *proper name*. Such are the expressions "Sovereign Good," "First Being," and "Supreme Cause."⁷⁰

Does this last category of names, expressing perfections without defect, that is, whatever is proper to God, give us the knowledge of God's nature? St. Thomas answers with a distinction. It is true that they have to do with God's substance,

⁷⁰ "Quia enim omnem perfectionem creaturae est in Deo invenire, sed per alium modum eminentiorem, quaecumque nomina absolute perfectionem absque defectu designant, de Deo praedicantur et aliis rebus; sicut . . . sapientia. . . . Quaecumque vero nomina huiusmodi perfectiones designant cum modo proprio creaturis, de Deo dici non possunt, nisi per similitudinem et metaphoram . . . ; sicut aliquis homo dicitur lapis, propter duritiam intellectus. . . . Quae vero huiusmodi perfectiones exprimentur cum supereminentiore modo, quo Deo conveniunt, de solo Deo dicuntur; sicut summum bonum, primum ens, et alia huiusmodi" (*I Cont. Gent.*, 30).

not only with His causality.⁷¹ It is true, moreover, that they signify what is positive in Him.⁷² However, this signification extends only to *the thing* which these names designate ("the thing signified" or "that which the name is meant to signify"). It does not include the *way* in which our words can express Him, or the "mode of signifying." Since our words are taken from the human order, they always imply as such an imperfection.⁷³

In what way can our words be united to express God? Are we capable of expressing Him? St. Thomas confesses that the only way in our power to connote the divine mode is negative. To exclude equivocation from our words and to succeed in signifying the mode of supereminence, we must know God as He is, we must seize the rich unity of a virtual and formally infinite multiplicity. But this is impossible for us. Thus we are reduced to saying: "God is eternal"—which means that He is not limited in time; or "He is infinite"—meaning that He is not limited in essence; or "He is immense"—and this means that He is not limited in space. If we depend upon the relations of the creature to God in order to signify that He is good, we can only say: "He is the Sovereign Good"; to point out *how* understanding He is: "He is the First Intelligence"; to indicate His mode of existence: "He is the First Being." This procedure teaches us very little. We cannot refuse anything with regard to the First Cause; on the contrary, it is necessary to grant Him everything which implies perfection in His work. However, the statement of this necessity adds nothing to the first denial. The only thing left for us to do is

⁷¹ *I Sent.*, d. XXXV, q. 1, a. 1, ad 2um.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ "Dico autem aliqua praedicatorum nominum perfectionem absque defectu importare, quantum *ad illud ad quod* significandum nomen fuit impositum; quantum vero *ad modum* significandi, omne nomen cum defectu est; nam nomine res exprimimus, eo modo quod intellectu concipimus. Intellectus autem noster, ex sensibilibus cognoscendi initium sumens, illum modum non transcendit, quem in rebus sensibilibus invenit; . . . et sic in omni nomine a nobis dicto, quantum ad modum significandi, imperfectio invenitur, quae Deo non competit" (*I Cont. Gent.*, 30).

humbly to acknowledge that we do not know what God is. We know only what He is not and what relation everything else bears to Him.⁷⁴ With respect to God, the question "whether He exists" is not beyond our ken. However, all the terms which define Him in a certain way, attempting to answer the question "what He is," have, fundamentally, only a *negative or relative* value.⁷⁵

It will be easier now to characterize St. Thomas' "*analogism*." This analogism is as a middle path or a summit between agnosticism and anthropomorphism. Although it clearly sacrifices all value of definition in relation to the formulas in which the divine is expressed, it recognizes that these formulas have an intellectual and objective value. According to St. Thomas, their value is to mark the relation of every perfection with its source. Between agnostic symbolism and anthropomorphism, St. Thomas attaches the relative to the transcendent. In this way, he can qualify one by the other. Then, too, he refuses to reduce the language of his theodicy to empty formulas or pure images which have no scientific value. Or, from another point of view, he respects the mystery about God, refusing thereby to lower God to the narrow measures of the human mind.

Diverse conceptions about our relations with the divine

Very clearly marked divergences separate Mr. Rudolph Otto from St. Thomas with regard to our ways of conceiving God. This is not surprising, once these divergences are accentuated in their respective ways of conceiving the genesis of our relations with Him. After briefly recalling the essential traits of Mr. Otto's positions on this matter, we shall undertake the detailed study of St. Thomas' positions. Finally we shall com-

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ "[Divinam substantiam] apprehendere non possumus cognoscendo quid est, sed aliqualem eius habemus notitiam cognoscendo *quod non est* . . . quia, in consideratione substantiae divinae, non possumus accipere *quid* quasi genus, nec distinctionem eius ab aliis rebus per affirmativas differentias accipere possumus, oportet eam accipere *per differentias negativas*" (*Ibid.*, 14).

pare the two doctrines, showing their similarities and their differences.

To perceive Mr. Otto's sentimentalism is only a matter of bringing out the essential traits, of marking out in very concise terms what Mr. Otto considers to be our relations with the divine—how they originate, develop, and expand. We reduce his system to sentimentalism. Here are the proper characteristics of his system. According to Mr. Otto, as we noted above, to speak of our relations with the divine would be to delve into schematization. The most proper formula to use would be to speak of our relations with the numinous, a mysterious object which is beyond every category and which sentiment alone attains. Our relations with Him are reduced to complex affective states which are of an irreducible genus entirely separated from every other genus. Mr. Otto classes these relations under the global name of religious feelings. After analyzing these feelings, he places them in the order in which they appear in the field of consciousness. First there is the *feeling of fright*, a fear of the numinous which is entirely different from the frights which we experience in the presence of any other object. Then there is the *feeling of stupor*, which immediately develops into what he calls "creature-consciousness." Little by little, the presence of this object is shown to have an irresistible attraction which, mixed with the stupor which always remains, arouses in us a *feeling of bewildering fascination*. Since the stupor remains, it constitutes the religious feeling essentially. If the feeling of fascination succeeds in provoking such feelings, this is explained by the fact that the numinous is revealed to us under the seizing traits of mystery, as the "*wholly other*."

These affective states are different from the similar feelings of moral exaltation because of the proper and entirely irreducible tonality of the former. It is evident that such a conception of our relations with the divine⁷⁶ possesses the

⁷⁶ We use the word "divine" in preference to "God," because the former is more vague, and thus more liable to acceptance on the part of those who support Mr. Otto's theory.

characteristics of all sentimentalism, for the most essential characteristic of sentimentalism lies in admitting only feeling as the source of the higher life and true inspiration, and the means of coming into contact with certain realities.

St. Thomas' teaching satisfies the mind far more than does that of Mr. Otto; yet we must analyze very carefully the texts in which this teaching is formulated, and place these texts in relation to the whole context. Only in this way shall we arrive at the full meaning and importance of each text. This procedure will demand many *excursus*, which, although seeming to take us away from our subject, are necessary if we want to understand St. Thomas' thought fully.

The term "reverential affection,"⁷⁷ in St. Thomas' theology, would correspond to Mr. Rudolph Otto's term, "religious feeling." St. Thomas' own term can be translated into the expression "feeling of reverence."⁷⁸ To discover and describe the way in which our relations with God are inspired and informed with reverence, according to St. Thomas, we must investigate how this feeling originates in our souls. Then we must understand how it can be fully developed and expanded, or, on the contrary, how it can deviate and be degraded. To make these researches truly fruitful, we must make a summary at the end of each step of the inquiry and thereby learn what the study has taught us about the profound nature of this feeling.

To what influences does St. Thomas attribute the birth in the human soul of a feeling of reverence towards God? What interior dispositions are required for the play of these influences upon the soul? St. Thomas has taken care to indicate all this in phrases pregnant with meaning. We shall begin by mentioning what he has to say on this matter. Then, with a view to penetrating into the full meaning of his statements, we shall try to bring out their implications in the light of our position. Perhaps in this way we shall succeed in

⁷⁷ *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 7, a. 6, c.

⁷⁸ It is well to pay special attention to St. Thomas' definition of "reverence," since modern usage of the word applies more to the *signs* of reverence than to the reverential fear itself.

showing how his teaching on this matter is related to the whole of his system, and that it is truly commanded by the positions he has taken with regard to other essential points in his theology.

We are going to group St. Thomas' statements in a logical order, that is, as they complement one another and add to what has been said previously. The most concise and perhaps the most meaningful statement is a text taken from the *Contra Gentiles*, Book III, Chapter 119, which has to do with religion. In this text St. Thomas furnishes the following reflection on the nature and motives of the movement which inclines us to experience reverence for God:

By a certain natural instinct man feels obliged to show in his own way reverence for God, Who is the principle of all good and from Whom is man's being.

What we must remember from this text is that our reverence for God is a *natural* movement of our souls, and that the motives which inspire reverence lie in the fact that God is our Beginning. He is the origin of our being and all good we receive.

Another text, taken from the *Summa Theologiae*, points out how our manner of manifesting our reverence to God is *natural*, and how it is *conventional*. St. Thomas makes this statement in the answer to the third objection of the second article, question 81 (IIa, IIae)—a question which deals with the virtue of religion in itself:

Man does certain things to manifest his reverence for God *because of the dictate of natural reason*; but that man do these or those determined things, is not a dictate of natural reason, but a determination of *divine or human law*.

Finally we have two complementary texts which bring out in detail the motives which cause a great reverence for God in the soul.

The first is taken from the third article of the eighty-second question (IIa IIae), which has to do with devotion, the prin-

cial act of the virtue of religion. We shall soon see the close connection of this act with the feeling of reverence.

Meditation must be the cause of devotion . . . inasmuch as through meditation man realizes that he must give himself to divine service. A twofold consideration leads man to this realization: one is on the part of divine goodness and benefits . . . this consideration arouses love, which is the proximate cause of devotion. The other . . . is on the part of man considering his defects by which he realizes that he needs help if he is to imitate God. This consideration excludes presumption, through which one is impeded from becoming subject to God, since he rests upon his own power.

This idea is taken up again in the fourth article of the same question, namely, that there is a twofold reflection required on our part if we are to become conscious of the true attitudes that we must have toward God. First there must be the reflection on God's goodness towards us and on His benefits. Then we must consider our own deficiencies and neediness.

Man feels naturally inclined to recognize his dependence upon God, especially as a remedy to the state of his contingency. St. Thomas brings this out in very expressive terms a little further on, in the same treatise on religion, in the first article of the eighty-fifth question:

Natural reason dictates that man become subject to some superior *because of the defects* which he feels in himself—defects in which he must be helped and directed. Whatever this superior being may be, all men call it *God*. Just as in natural things the inferior are naturally subject to the superior, so also natural reason commands man *by a natural inclination* to manifest subjection and honor according to his means to what is above man.

This text offers many precisions which must be carefully noted. It insists upon the natural character of our first relations with God. It determines in what these relations consist: namely, in a twofold movement which inclines us to recognize our dependence by an attitude of submission and reverence towards God. This movement of the soul, quite spontaneous on our part, requires only that we realize our neediness and absolute dependence upon this Being which everyone calls

God. This feeling of reverence is natural to us, and can be experienced by the humblest human soul. Even a confused knowledge of God is all that is needed to have Him inspire us by letting us know sufficiently that He is our Beginning.

Before taking up the implications of these texts according to St. Thomas' teaching, we must first make a resumé of what we have learned. The texts we have cited concern the psychological origins of our relations with God. St. Thomas demands a twofold condition on our part: to enter into relations with God, we must first know Him. For this even a confused knowledge about God suffices. Then, what is more important, we must have realized our state of dependence upon Him. This realization takes place most frequently only in moments of dejection, in which we realize our indigence and deficiencies, and, moreover, recognize at what point God is the *Beginning* of what we are and of what we possess. It is then that we experience a spontaneous movement, a quite natural inclination to show Him our reverence—as a debt, or, as St. Thomas precises in the text of the *Summa* which we have cited, to recognize our subjection to Him and to render Him the honor which is due to Him. Our relations with God thus begin *spontaneously* and *naturally* with reverence.

We shall not fully understand the texts we have just cited unless we succeed in resolving the following problems: first, "What precisely does St. Thomas mean by reverence?" Then, "Why do our relations with God begin with reverence?"

In St. Thomas the problem of the psychological origins of our relations with God is placed on the natural plane. Thus the Angelic Doctor is faithful to his usual procedure, which consists in analyzing the aspirations of human nature before the activities of grace. Most frequently he does not consider the actual conditions of our nature after the fall until he has determined the normal ways in which human nature would have developed if this nature had always obeyed its fundamental demands. This explains why St. Thomas seems so preoccupied with determining whether religion responds to a natural need in man. We must, however, be careful to understand the exact meaning of his answer.

In the first text cited from St. Thomas, he says that we feel reverence for God because of the impetus of natural instinct. This instinct is made explicit and manifest at the moment when we realize what God means for us, at the moment when our knowledge about God, no matter how confused it may be, takes on all its meaning in relation to our own lives. But how does this instinct of nature arise in us? In what exact meaning can it be called a need of nature? To understand these difficulties we are going to try to orient ourselves in relation to the whole of St. Thomas' theology.

Often in his theological works St. Thomas returns to a point of doctrine which will be of great help to us. This point is the natural desire which every human intellect has to see God. This desire reveals a natural tendency of our intellects to know God as He is. Although this tendency is confused at the beginning of the life of the intellect, it is accentuated and formed into a gradually more explicit desire as the intellect advances in knowledge. According to St. Thomas, these are the stages of the development of this desire. By the power of the active intellect, the passive intellect can know everything which can be known by means of sensible things. But this kind of knowledge cannot constitute man's last end, since it leaves him dissatisfied. However, when the last end is gained, the natural desire is appeased. On the contrary, no matter how far one advances in knowledge drawn from sensible things, he always has a desire to know something else. This desire is of such a nature that, knowing an effect, we want to know its cause. Once we know the exterior particularities of any object, we are not satisfied until we know the essence of that object. The natural desire to know cannot be appeased until we know the first cause, not in any way whatsoever, but in its essence. The last end of an intellectual creature, St. Thomas concludes, lies in seeing God in His Essence.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ "Virtus intellectus agentis est, ut phantasmata quae sunt intelligibilia in potentia faciat intelligibilia in actu . . . ; phantasmata autem sunt accepta per sensum. Per intellectum igitur agentem intellectus noster in actum reducitur respectu horum intelligibilium tantum, in quorum notitiam per sensibilia possumus

It is important to remember that the natural tendency of our minds to know God is presupposed to all natural knowledge about Him, even the most confused. If we spontaneously show God reverence as soon as we realize—even in a confused manner—that God is our beginning, we do so on the presupposition of a natural inclination of our wills to subject themselves to whatever is superior to them. This is a natural instinct which depends upon the more general tendency of the will to love God above all things. Among these diverse tendencies there is a perfect subordination on the natural plane: they are all ordained to the possession of man's good. They proceed from one another, and will be truly at rest only when man's good has been attained. In this light our relations with God ultimately do not begin with an act of knowing God, even though this be the first, but in the very nature of our intellect as it is in the very nature of our will that we must find the natural inclination to revere God. The first acts of these faculties are only spontaneous manifestations of these tendencies. Having established this point, we can determine what St. Thomas means by "reverence."

Every time St. Thomas speaks about reverence, he identifies it with fear. He even speaks of reverential fear. Evidently he considers reverential fear as a separate fear, one which has a very special character.⁸⁰ He is careful to demonstrate how this fear is distinct from the other kinds of fear. Since it is a movement of the soul, we can say that it receives its generic character from the faculty or potency which experiences it. Its

devenire. Impossibile est autem in tali cognitione ultimum hominis finem consistere: nam ultimo fine adepto desiderium naturale qui escit. . . . Impossibile est autem naturale desiderium esse vanum. . . . Tale est autem in nobis sciendi desiderium, ut cognoscentes effectum, desideremus cognoscere causam, et in quocumque re, cognitis quibuscumque eius circumstantiis, non qui escit nostrum desiderium, quousque eius essentiam cognoscamus. Non igitur naturale desiderium sciendi potest quietari in nobis, quousque primam causam cognoscamus non quocumque modo, sed per eius essentiam. Prima autem causa Deus est, . . . est igitur finis ultimus intellectualis creaturae, Deum per essentiam videre" (*Comp. Theol.*, 104).

⁸⁰ *Q. D. de Spe*, q. 1, a. 4, ad 2um.

specific notes are derived from the object which can arouse this fear. However, we must not forget that the generic element itself is specified by a more universal object. It should cause no surprise to find St. Thomas explaining the true nature of reverence in such a way. He is merely adhering to the principles which enabled him to elaborate, as an integral part of his theology, a very exact psychology of human conduct—with a consideration of the many rational and emotional components of human conduct. In accord with his first principle, he transposes his observations on transitory movement to the order of immanent activity,⁸¹ thus using the physical knowledge of inanimate being, delineated in his comments on Aristotle's physics, to explain the animate kingdom. For St. Thomas the degrees of immanence begin with the lowest form of life.⁸² He explains the nature of psychic activity by an analogy with the physical realm. Yet St. Thomas is careful to bring out all the distinctions and correctives which prevent one from confusing the two orders. In general, he compares powers to act with movable being, action with motion, and the objects toward which our activity leads with movers. In the light of these analogies, we have the following axioms which he formulates quite frequently:

Every object is compared to the operation of the soul either as an agent or as an end.⁸³

The diversity of species is according to form; the diversity of genera, according to matter: for those things are generically diverse which have diverse matter.⁸⁴

Just as matter is determined to one form through one agent, so also is a passive potency determined to one specific act by the nature of one object.⁸⁵

In the light of these principles we can better perceive the intentions in St. Thomas' procedure in trying to determine the *subject* and *object* of reverence.

⁸¹ *Summa Theol.*, I, q. 9, a. 1, c., and ad lum.

⁸² *IV Cont. Gent.*, 11.

⁸⁴ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 54, a. 1, ad lum.

⁸³ *In II de Anima*, lect. 6, n. 305.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, a. 1, c.

Reverence is an activity of our souls of a *distinct genus*, and that by reason of its *subject*: not by reason of what the Scholastics call the "*subject quod*," the radical subject of all our human conduct, that is, the very essence of our souls,⁸⁶ but the "*subject quo*," that is, the faculty or potency by which the soul experiences reverence for God. The soul is not immediately operative, but operates through its potencies.⁸⁷ Reverence is fear, but it is not a passion of the soul. Therefore, it is denominated fear only by analogy, for it is "felt" by the *will*. Its proper subject is, then, not the sensible appetite, but the rational. It cannot be otherwise for St. Thomas, since reverence is experienced *with regard to God*, Who is not a sensible object but a reality of the spiritual order. From this, one can see how reverence can be a sentiment, and with what precise meaning St. Thomas speaks of "reverential affection." Here are the most expressive texts on this subject. When St. Thomas answers an objection based upon a text from St. John Damascene⁸⁸—an objection trying to prove that reverence is not a fear, since it is not enumerated among the different species in the passions—he states that reverence belongs to the genus of fear which has a relation only to God as its object:

Damascene divides fear as it is a passion of the soul. But the division of fear given here is according to its ordination to God.⁸⁹

Since this fear has no other relation than to God, it should, like hope, be placed in the will as its subject. This is how St. Thomas argues with regard to hope, a theological virtue:

The act of the virtue of hope cannot belong to the sensitive appetite, because the good which is the principal object of this virtue is not some sensible good, but the *divine good*. Therefore, hope is in the superior appetite, which is called the will, as in its proper subject.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 58, a. 2, c.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, I, q. 77, a. 6, c. and a. 7, c.

⁸⁸ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 19, a. 2, ad 1um.

⁸⁹ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 19, a. 2, ad 1um.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, q. 18, a. 1, c.

The answer to the first objection in the same article resolves the objection in the same way and for the same reasons.⁹¹ These texts bring out not only the subject of reverence, but also its object. Since these two realities determine each other, we cannot come to identify one without having recourse to the other.⁹²

Since the *object* of reverence is God, it transcends the sensible world and attracts, as such, only our spiritual faculties. However, let us make further distinctions. Because reverence is a fear, its object must be an arduous reality—not a good, but an evil. In this, reverence differs from hope.⁹³ It differs from sorrow inasmuch as its object is a *future* arduous evil, not one that is present.⁹⁴ It has to do with a future arduous evil which, although difficult to bear, can nevertheless be avoided. In this we have the proper characteristic of reverence⁹⁵—a characteristic which is the cause of the movement of flight.⁹⁶

All that seems to be contradictory. God is the Sovereign Good. Even if we consider Him on the natural plane, how can God inspire us with fear? This can happen, St. Thomas explains, to the extent that He is “*infinite Justice*,” just as we hope in Him because He is “*infinite Mercy*.”⁹⁷ Fear has a twofold object: it has first the *evil* from which one flees; then it has the *reality from which evil can come*. Since God is goodness itself, He cannot be feared for Himself, but because evils can come to us from Him in our relations with Him. Under this second aspect God becomes an object of fear.⁹⁸ He can reduce us to nothing, or He can inflict punishments upon us. On our part, we can offend Him and thus break our relations with Him. Thus, in summary, one can see how we fear God’s Justice more than God Himself. All of this will become clearer when we put it in the context of redeemed nature.

For the moment let us remember only that it is on our part,

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, ad 1um.

⁹² *In II de Anima*, lect. 6, n. 308.

⁹³ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 41, a. 2, c.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, ad 3um.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 19, a. 11, c.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, a. 1, ad 2um.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, a. 1, c.

and in our relations with God, that we should fear an evil which can gravely endanger these relations.⁹⁹ We shall try to determine this evil now. What is, precisely, this future arduous evil which is difficult to bear and yet possible to avoid—the evil which keeps us in an attitude of reverence before God? To determine it, we must recall at what moments reverence for God arises in the soul, for this reverence arises, as we said before, when we realize our absolute need in relation to Him. It is at such a time that we perceive the infinite distance which separates us from Him. Then it appears clearly, and with frightening lucidity, that the greatest evil for us would be to try to become equal to Him, or to compare ourselves to Him.¹⁰⁰

St. Thomas invites us to pursue our researches further. The evil from which we flee when we feel reverence for God is, therefore, the attempt to make ourselves His equals. This evil is always dependent upon another evil remaining in our very being, namely, that of our state of radical contingency in relation to God. This latter is a *present* evil which establishes us, inasmuch as we are creatures, at an infinite distance from the Creator-Being. This evil inspires us with the fear of an ever-possible future evil: the inane temptation to make ourselves God's equals. That is why, in these moments of lucidity, the soul is seized with fear. It contracts into its own smallness. The following are St. Thomas' own words:

Here is the third *natural defect*, according to which every creature is infinitely distant from God. This defect will never be taken away. In respect to this defect there is *reverential fear*, which will show reverence under the Creator because of the consideration of His majesty. This fear makes the creature leap down into his own smallness.¹⁰¹

St. Thomas also provides more profound reflections about the true nature of our reverence for God. We have only to consent to follow him in his analyses on this matter. Already

⁹⁹ "Malum culpae non est a Deo sicut ab auctore, sed est a nobis ipsis, inquantum a Deo *recedimus*" (*Ibid.*, ad 3um). "[Deus] potest esse obiectum timoris; inquantum . . . ab ipso, vel *per comparisonem* ad ipsum, nobis potest aliquod malum imminere" (*Ibid.*, c.).

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, q. 7, a. 1, c.

¹⁰¹ *Q. D. de Spe*, q. 1, a. 4, ad 2um.

he has told us that reverence consists essentially in a fear of making ourselves God's equals. He has pointed out that on our part this fear would take hold of us when we realize our absolute dependence upon God. But this reason does not satisfy him completely. We shall soon see why. The most fundamental motive, which incites us not to dare to make ourselves God's equals, is the fear of being separated from Him. Thus, as St. Thomas explains clearly in other places, reverence brings with it a twofold movement of flight, each movement being closely dependent upon the other. The Angelic Doctor calls these movements "flight from separation from God" and "flight from making oneself God's equal."¹⁰² The first flight is the principle of the second, but both are two attitudes of the soul dictated by the same consideration of God. Here it is very evident that St. Thomas is careful to show the relation of the fear which is reverence to love. (It is necessary to see the relation between this treatise and St. Thomas' psychology on the passions, for he speaks of the fear "experienced" by the will through analogy with the *passion* of fear, as we have mentioned already.) For him, every passion depends upon love in order to arise in the soul.¹⁰³ What love of God is in question here (for we fear to be separated from God)? We have only to recall the first text cited at the beginning of our researches on the psychological origins of the feeling of reverence. We begin to experience reverence for God at the moment when we realize that He is our *Beginning*.¹⁰⁴ Now we must seek to answer the original intriguing question: *why do our relations with God originate spontaneously in reverence?*

The text to which we must make reference is that to which we have just alluded, for this text implicitly contains everything we are looking for. We have only to ask St. Thomas to explain it if we want to solve the problem which preoccupies us:

¹⁰² *Q. D. de Verit.*, q. 28, a. 4, ad 4um.

¹⁰³ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 26, a. 1, ad 2um.

¹⁰⁴ "Dei cultus religio nominatur, quia huiusmodi actibus quodammodo homo se ligat ut ab eo non evagetur, et quia etiam quodam naturali instinctu *se obligatum sentit Deo* ut suo modo *reverentiam* ei impendat, a quo est sui esse et omnis boni *principium*." (III *Cont. Gent.*, 119, c.).

By a certain natural instinct man feels obliged to show reverence to God, Who is the source of his being and of every good—in his own way.¹⁰⁵

Let us pay strict attention to all the words. It is by the most spontaneous natural sentiment that we feel obliged to manifest our reverence for God, from Whom we have being and all our possessions. Reverence is revealed to be both a *natural sentiment* and an *obligation, a debt* to God, our Principle.

What does the fact that God is our Principle imply for us? Of what do we become conscious when we realize that God is our Principle? The implication is that we depend upon Him wholly, that is, not only in the order of existence, but also in the order of activity. He is more than a Principle for us. He is *the first Principle*, our Creator and our first Mover. God has created all of us. Whatever existence we have comes from Him, or more precisely He gives us *absolutely and freely* the whole gift of existing in a *continual, unceasing* manner. At each instant we are the beneficiaries of His benevolence and beneficence. We have been created *by Him*; it is out of sheer goodness that He conserves us in existence. He could justly annihilate us at any moment. Moreover, we belong to Him, for it can be only *for Himself* that He has created us and that He wishes to conserve us in being.

Thus God realizes the notion of principle *by an eminent title*. For according to St. Thomas, to be a principle requires communication on the part of the principle to that which depends upon it: a benefit which can result only from a superiority of being in the one who gives this benefit. In this light the principle of anyone bestows a benefit in his regard. This benefit places the benefactor in a state of *excellence* in relation to the beneficiary. For St. Thomas, then, the notion of principle connotes the ideas of beneficence and excellence.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ "Homo efficitur diversimode aliis debitor secundum eorum diversam excellentiam, et diversa *beneficia* ab eis suscepta. In utroque autem Deus summum obtinet locum, et qui *excellentissimus* est, et est nobis essendi et gubernationis primum principium" (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 101, a. 1).

The *notion of paternity* is bound up with the notion of principle. To see how our reverence for God is connected with our love of God, we must determine in what sense He is our Father. The first determination must be on the natural plane. Later we shall determine this paternity on the plane of grace, in which we become His sons by adoption, that is, by sharing in His divine nature. He is our Father in so far as we owe Him everything, in so far as we are His creatures. And we are creatures *continually*. Therefore, inasmuch as God is the first principle of the creation and government of the world, He has a greater right to the title of Father than our parents or our country, according to St. Thomas' own explicit statement.¹⁰⁷

It follows from this that our relations with God should be modeled on those of children with their parents. In gratitude for the benefit of life, children should manifest *piety* for their parents. This very complex sentiment implies, on the part of the children, love, reverence, and submission. St. Thomas' very detailed analysis will be very helpful in this matter.¹⁰⁸

The most instructive element lies in the order which St. Thomas establishes among the various sentiments which make up filial piety. Since the gift of life is a communication, and establishes a union between a father and his son (so that St. Thomas says that the son is "in a certain way a part of him," that is, the father),¹⁰⁹ the normal relations between son and father should be relations of love. It is true that these relations are destined to expand into that friendship which St. Thomas calls "the friendship according to superabundance" or "the love of excellence."¹¹⁰ But we must carefully note the expressions which St. Thomas uses to name this friendship. It is a distinct friendship which can exist among persons of un-

¹⁰⁷ "Deus longe excellentiori modo est principium essendi et gubernationis quam pater vel patria. . . . Sed ea quae sunt creaturarum per quandam superexcellenciam et causalitatem transferuntur in Deum. . . . Unde per excellentiam pietas cultus Dei nominatur, sicut et Deus *excellenter* dicitur Pater noster" (*Ibid.*, a. 3, ad 2um).

¹⁰⁸ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 101.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, q. 57, a. 4, c.

¹¹⁰ *In VIII Ethic.*, lect. 7, n. 1625.

equal conditions,¹¹¹ but several elements are demanded for the existence of this type of friendship. Although there is only love and beneficence in the relation of the father to his child, in the relation of the child to the father there is not the same gratuity; for the one who owes everything (the child) is not limited to making a proof of a mere return of affection. The child should also show reverence and submission towards his parents. The love which he experiences for them should spontaneously and naturally urge him on to further acts. In this light, filial love can exist only when previously expressed in reverence and submission. Why? St. Thomas tells us that it belongs to the very nature of this friendship.¹¹² Every friendship presupposes a certain equality among the friends; but in this case the state of excellence of the principle in relation to the beneficiary impedes an absolute equality. Friendship can be established between a superior and an inferior only on the condition that each proves his love in proportion to the dignity of the other.¹¹³ This supposes on the part of the inferior (the child) that he does not demand from his parents the same attitudes to which he himself is obliged.¹¹⁴ Among these attitudes the first to be adopted is to respect the distance which separates him from them. Then the child must recognize his dependence upon them. St. Thomas distinguishes these two mutual attitudes by the names of reverence and submission. According to him, the proper role of these attitudes is to insure a certain equality by supplying an excess of deference which will make up for the inequality of their conditions. In this way, their relations will expand into a reciprocal love.

In all friendships which result from the superabundance of one person in relation to another, there must be *proportional* loving, namely, that the better one be loved more than he loves. For since each is loved *according to his dignity*, there seems to result a *certain equality*, namely, a proportional equality which seems to belong to friendship.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, n. 1626.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, n. 1627.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, lect. 8, n. 1649.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, lect. 7, n. 1629.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, n. 1630.

Let us return to the case of our relations with God. We can now see why on our part these relations must be marked by reverence from the very start. As we have said before, they must be modeled upon the relations of filial piety between children and their parents. St. Thomas has already furnished the reason: God is *the Father of every creature by an eminent title*.

As in the case of our parents, St. Thomas sees in God's benefits in the continual gifts which He makes to us of being and of natural goods, the basis of a natural love between God and us.¹¹⁶ This is the natural love of a part for its whole, a love which extends to preference for the good of the whole to the individual good of the part.¹¹⁷ Let us note that St. Thomas uses the same terminology to mark both our relations with God and the relations of a son with his father. We are as a *part* of God; we share in His Being. If we experience love for God, we do this only by noticing His benefits, the bonds which unite us with Him, and what He has in common with us. When we take notice of His benefits, we discover our absolute dependence upon Him. When we see this, we notice everything which separates Him from us, *the infinite distance* between Him Who is *Being by His very Essence* and ourselves who possess being only by participation. From the moment that we discover He is our principle we realize His beneficence and His excellence. His beneficence invites us to love; His excellence should keep us in an attitude of reverence:

The object of love is good; but the object of honor or reverence is some excellent thing.¹¹⁸

This love, then, should be translated first into reverence, then into submission. However, this reverence and this submission are *in a unique genus* resulting from the reception of benefits and from the sovereign excellence of God.

¹¹⁶ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 24, a. 2, ad 1um.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 109, a. 3, c.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 4, ad 3um.

In both, God takes the highest place, for He is *the most excellent being* and for us the *first principle* of existence and government.¹¹⁹

The situation of inequality could not be greater. Therefore, if love is to be established between God and His creature, this love must be of a very special nature and in fact unique.

A singular excellence belongs to God, insofar as He *infinitely transcends* everything according to every excess possible.¹²⁰

In what precisely does the resulting fear, which St. Thomas calls the fear of being separated from God, consist? Fundamentally it is a fear of being annihilated by God, "*fear of annihilation.*" The gift of being unites us with God; the return to nothingness would definitively separate us from Him. We have no strict right to exist or to be conserved in being. On God's part it is pure gratuity; our annihilation would be no injustice to us. This fear never disappears completely, for it bears on an evil which always remains possible. To the extent that our love for God is purified and intensified, the fear of being annihilated is accompanied with the fear of offending God, "*the fear of offense.*" We too can take the initiative of breaking our relations with God. Our faults touch Him directly; they can separate us from Him. Moreover, the fear of being separated from God's infinite beneficence directs us to protest our submission to Him upon Whom we are conscious of being absolutely dependent.

Now we can group together the information we have gathered in the course of this investigation and manifest in a synthetic manner the why and how of the origins of our relations with God according to St. Thomas' conception. As soon as we become conscious of our state of dependence, contingency, and absolute neediness in relation to God, there arises in us the fear of the evil of being separated from Him and His beneficence. What is first in us is the desire to remain united with Him. This is a natural love which we experience for Him Whose being we share.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, q. 101, a. 1, c.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, q. 81, a. 4, c.

This fear of being separated from God is precised and perfected in the fear of making ourselves His equals. This latter fear is inspired by the former. From the very moment when we realize our condition of being creatures and the infinite distance which separates us from our first principle, we are seized by the fear of daring to make ourselves His equals instead of recognizing our dependence.

In this light, what our wills first experience spontaneously (when through the consciousness of our misery and our nothingness God suddenly appears to us according to what He means to us) is the fear of ever yielding to the temptation of making ourselves His equals and of not submitting ourselves to Him from Whom we have all. These are natural and spontaneous movements of retreat into our own smallness and of submission to His divine goodness. It is in this way that our natural love is first expressed, for at the same moment we realize that every other attitude would separate us from Him.

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(To be concluded.)

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST

BY JOHN OF ST. THOMAS

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CHAPTER IV *

The Gifts of Wisdom and Knowledge

1. In the doctrine of St. Thomas the Gifts of Wisdom and Knowledge are distinct from the Gift of Understanding—as is evident from the preceding chapter. The Gift of Understanding has

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OUTLINE OF CHAPTER IV

The Gifts of Wisdom and Knowledge

- I. THE FORMAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN WISDOM AND THE OTHER GIFTS AND HABITS
 - A. Introductory nexus with previous chapter (1)
 - B. The aspects of Wisdom (2)
 1. According to St. Thomas (3)
 2. According to Suarez (4)
 - C. Nature of Wisdom (5)
 1. In general (6)
 2. In particular (7)
 - a) Similarity of virtue and Gift of Wisdom (8)
 - b) Difference between the virtue and Gift of Wisdom (9)
 - D. Wisdom and Charity
 1. An objection and its solution according to Suarez (10)
 2. Thomistic solution from the distinction of the efficient and unitive acts in love (11)
 3. An objection on the effect of love (12)
 4. Reply (13)
 - a) From the testimony of St. Thomas (14)
 - b) Another argument (15 and 16)
 - E. Distinction among Wisdom, Faith and the other Gifts (17)
 1. Distinction between Wisdom and Faith
 - a) A posteriori (18)
 - b) A priori (19)

as its function the apprehension and penetration of truth, while the other Gifts judge of that truth. This point was brought out

2. Suarez's difficulty with the words of St. Thomas (20)
 - a) Reply (21)
 - b) Corroboration from the very words of St. Thomas (22)
3. Explanation of the difference of judgment in Wisdom and Faith (23)
4. Distinction of Wisdom from the other Gifts
 - a) From Understanding and Counsel (24)
 - b) From Knowledge (25, 26 and 27)
 - c) A further note on Counsel (28)

F. Objections and Replies

1. Objection (29)
 - a) First confirmation (30)
 - b) Second confirmation (31)
2. Reply (32)
 - a) To the first confirmation (33 and 34)
 - b) To the second confirmation (35)
3. A note on the possibility of discourse in the Gift of Wisdom (36)

II. THE OBJECTS OF WISDOM

- A. Suarez on the objects of Wisdom
 1. His postulates (37)
 2. His difficulty (38)
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- B. St. Thomas on Wisdom (40)
 1. The fundamentals of the Thomistic position (41)
 2. Solution of Suarez's difficulty (42)
 3. Refutation of his distinction between Faith and Wisdom (43)
- C. Objection and Reply
 1. Objection to the doctrine of St. Thomas (44)
 2. Confirmation of this objection (45)
 3. Reply to the objection itself (46 and 47)
 4. Reply to the confirmation (48)

III. THE GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE

- A. The nature of Knowledge
 1. Introductory nexus with treatment of Wisdom (49)
 2. Comparison of the Gift of Knowledge and the virtue of the same name (50 and 51)
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 - a) The Suarezian explanation (53)
 - b) Explanation in the texts of St. Thomas (54 and 55)
 - c) Additional notions by John of St. Thomas (56, 57 and 58)
- B. The distinction between Knowledge, Faith, Counsel, Wisdom and acquired knowledge (59)
- C. The objects of Knowledge (60)

by distinguishing simple judgment, such as is had through the habit of principles in the simple penetration of terms, from a resolutive or analytic judgment, of the scientific habits, which give the essence and the cause of the thing understood.

This chapter will be occupied with explaining how the Gifts of Wisdom and Knowledge are distinguished from the moral virtues, which are in the appetitive potency, and from the intellectual and theological virtues and the Beatific Vision, which are all related to the intellect.

The Formal Principle of the Distinction of the Gift of Wisdom from the Other Gifts and Habits

2. Two things are to be noted in making any distinctions among the habits and virtues:

a) The first is the formal nature under which each proceeds, for this formal principle specifies the act and the habit.

b) The second is the object, which stands as the matter upon which the habit acts through the medium of its formal nature.

3. Accordingly, in explaining the formal nature of the Gift of Wisdom, St. Thomas¹ argues from a proportion and likeness to the intellectual virtue of wisdom. This is the wisdom that judges of things according to their highest causes, as does metaphysics in the philosophical disciplines. For this reason, St. Thomas frequently attributes judgment to the Gift of Wisdom and the apprehension and penetration of divine truths to the Gift of Understanding. But St. Thomas does not affirm that the proper, specific, and adequate nature of Wisdom lies in the mere fact that it judges of divine and supernatural things. Judgment is within the province of other habits besides the Gift of Wisdom.

Faith has a judgment since in belief there is a determined assent to divine things. Even prophecy judges of the things revealed to it.² The infused knowledge in Christ, the Gift of Knowledge in the faithful, the knowledge preceding and regulating the pious affection before Faith, and a multitude of other things which are known through the impulse of the Holy Ghost are known with some sort of judgment.

Thus any explanation of the Gift of Wisdom which relies upon

¹ *Summa Theologica*, II-II, Q. 68, a. 4.

² II-II, Q. 171.

the mere fact that it judges of divine things from an impulse of the Holy Ghost is not adequate nor has it given the proper and specific nature of the Gift.

4. Father Suarez³ posits such an argument in the form of an objection against St. Thomas, who states⁴ in a definitive manner that the Gift of Wisdom is given to perfect the speculative intellect in its judgment by a special impulse of the Holy Ghost. He alleges against St. Thomas all the instances proposed above, and finally decides that there is not an adequate description of the Gift of Wisdom in the explanation of St. Thomas.

However, none of this has any probative value against St. Thomas. In the beginning of the article the Holy Doctor presupposes that the Gifts perfect a man so that he may be prompt to follow the impulse of the Holy Ghost. From this he proceeds to show how the Gifts are distributed throughout the intellective and appetitive powers. Among these, he notes that it is the special province of the Gift of Wisdom to judge. Its judgment is unique, proceeding from a special impulse, by which the mind is elevated to judge with promptitude, and by which the soul is united and subjected to God from a connaturality and experience of divine things. This is an adequate description of the Gift of Wisdom. Neither prophecy nor Faith can do this, since they can be found in sinners, who are not united to God by grace. Even infused knowledge does not judge from an experience or union or effective attachment but rather from the truth of the thing clearly known as it is in itself.

The Gift of Wisdom does not judge from any knowledge derived from study and reasoning about causes or even by a light which manifests them in themselves. It judges from a connaturality and union with the supreme cause which is possessed as it were through experience.⁵

5. It must be presupposed, then, that the Gift of Wisdom is ordained to a resolutive and analytic judgment of divine things—not to the simple judgment in the understanding of principles. For Wisdom forms its judgment through the highest causes. The task of this chapter is the explanation of how Wisdom knows these causes and under what formality it judges of them.

³ II *De Gratia*, c. 18, a. 2.

⁴ I-II, Q. 68, a. 4.

⁵ II-II, Q. 45.

Following upon this there is the treatment of the objects of the Gift: what are the divine truths concerning which Wisdom judges?

6. The formal nature by which Wisdom knows the highest causes is an internal experience of God and divine things. It is a taste, love, delight, or internal contact of the will with spiritual things. By reason of its union with spiritual truths the soul is, as it were, made connatural to things divine. Through this tasting Wisdom discerns spiritual truths from the sensible and created. In this life Wisdom acts only imperfectly, by means of negation, but in heaven it acts quite perfectly, through positive evidence. The soul is moved to uncover the cause or reason of whatever it tends to know through Wisdom. According to St. Thomas⁶ rectitude of judgment may be had in two ways. The first way is according to the perfect use of reason. The second is through a certain connaturality with the things to be judged. For example, in regard to matters of chastity, a man who has learned moral science may judge correctly of them by his power of reason. But one having the habit of chastity judges of them through a connaturality towards such things. Likewise, it is the province of the intellectual virtue of wisdom to judge of divine things through speculative inquiry. But it pertains to that Wisdom which is a Gift of the Holy Ghost to judge of them according to a connaturality with them. Denis, in *The Divine Names*,⁷ wrote of Hierotheus that "he is perfect not only in learning divine things, but in suffering them as well." Reference should also be made to St. Thomas' *Commentary on the Sentences*⁸ in which he teaches that Wisdom implies an overflowing fullness of knowledge, which imparts certitude of great and marvelous things unknown to others. It is a certitude that can judge all things and order things through its fullness.

7. With the foregoing as a description of Wisdom in general, St. Thomas continues by adding a distinction. "The plenitude of knowledge had by some through study and an acuteness of intellect is the virtue the Philosopher⁹ called wisdom. But in others a plenitude of knowledge is occasioned by an affinity to divine things,

⁶ II-II, Q. 45, a. 2.

⁷ *De Divinis Nominibus*, c. 3. P. G. iii, 648.

⁸ III, d. 35, q. 2, a. 1.

⁹ VI *Nichomachean Ethics*.

as Denis wrote of Hierotheus who learned divine things by suffering them." Again in distinguishing Wisdom from Faith St. Thomas writes: ¹⁰ "Faith is a simple knowledge of those articles which are the principles of all Christian wisdom: the Gift of Wisdom goes on to a certain divine and in a way explicit contemplation of the articles held by Faith in an undeveloped human way. Hence Wisdom is a Gift and Faith a virtue."

8. Wherefore it is of the formal nature of the Gift of Wisdom that it proceed through causes and through divine reasons (which are the highest causes) in the search for either divine or created truths: *for the spiritual man judges all*.¹¹ These divine reasons through which wisdom proceeds to give its account are not known in their essence by this Gift of Wisdom, but lovingly, mystically, and from a connaturality and union, or interior experience of divine things.

The similarity between the Gift of Wisdom and the virtue called wisdom (as among other Gifts proportioned to virtues) arises from the fact that both are concerned with the attainment of truths through their supreme causes. Both the virtue and the Gift imply an intellectual habit—indeed the highest of the intellectual habits, supreme in the order of knowledge. Since it is proper to science to know causes, the science which considers the highest causes is supreme and holds the most eminent place. For neither would be supreme if it did not have some eminence over the other types of knowledge. This should be wisdom, either the virtue or the Gift.

9. The difference between the Gift of Wisdom and the virtue of wisdom should be founded upon their respective modes of knowing the highest causes and of obtaining through them the truths they know. The Gift of Wisdom in a loving and mystical way attains divine things which are the Supreme Causes. This mystical experience is properly considered a gift of God. For although all the supernatural habits and virtues are gifts of God, it is one thing to attain an object by means of a gift and quite another to attain to it because of the gift, as if the act of giving with which God gives Himself to us pertained to the essence of the act of attaining the object. God gives Himself through His Spirit and His will, inasmuch as He opens His heart. The primary thing in any gift

¹⁰ III, d. 35, q. 2, a. 1, ad 1.

¹¹ II Corinthians, ii, 15.

is that the giver should open his heart and give himself or his will to another. He should be joined to the other person in heart, i. e., in spirit and love, according to David: *If you come peaceably to me . . . let my heart be joined to you.*¹²

The Gift of Wisdom is not just any sort of wisdom but the spirit of wisdom. It proceeds from love and a spirit, from a giving by which men experience within themselves how good the will of God is. In it they rejoice and through it they judge perfectly of divine things. Therefore, the formal aspect under which the Gift of Wisdom reaches the highest cause, the Divine Cause, is an experiential knowledge of God, in which He is united to the soul in its very depths and gives Himself to it. This is the meaning of "knowing by the Spirit," knowing not from an illumination or speculation on the Divine Nature, but through a loving experience of union.

10. At this point, it might be objected that the spirit of love is in the will, while wisdom is in the intellect. The light of the intellect does not become more intense by reason of the will. Consequently, judgment and wisdom cannot increase by reason of a gift which belongs to the will. Moreover, since experience and loving union are the natural consequences of the act of love in the will, they are not supernaturally added to the virtue of Charity. Therefore under this aspect the Gift of Wisdom is not distinguished from the virtue of Charity.

If a reply were to be made according to the opinion of Father Suarez, it would read somewhat like this. Love transforms the beloved into the one loving through a peculiar union. There easily arises from this a judgment through a sort of connaturality to the object. According to St. Augustine,¹³ "The more ardently we love God, the more surely and serenely we shall see Him." One who loves is more attentive to the thing loved and is more easily pleased by it. In the words of Our Lord, *If anyone desires to do His will, he will know of the teaching whether it is from God.*¹⁴

However, this argument alone does not suffice to explain the proper and formal aspect of the Gift of Wisdom. For if divine love and union and affective connaturality alone are presupposed for

¹² *I Paralipomenon*, xii, 17.

¹³ *VIII De Trinitate*, c. 9. *P. L.* xlii, 959.

¹⁴ *John*, vii, 17.

the mind to be more attentive in the consideration of the object of its love, and for it to be more easily pleased by it, Wisdom would be restricted to the order of efficient causality or application. The will would merely render the intellect more attentive in its consideration, not by offering more light or expounding anything in the intellect but by applying the intellect to operate under the same light with greater attention. This action would leave the type of knowledge unchanged. It would be much the same as when the will applies the power of sight or hearing to act with greater attention. The will does not perfect the potency or sharpen the sight, but merely applies the faculty to the act of seeing. If love does nothing more than this to the Gift of Wisdom, the precise nature of the light and the formal aspect on the part of the intellect which distinguishes this Gift from Faith and the virtue of wisdom would remain unexplained.

11. Wherefore it must be noted that love can be considered in two ways:

a) First, as it applies itself and other powers to action. This love is restricted to the executive or efficient order. It applies the agent to act.

b) Secondly, as it applies and unites the object to itself, assimilating it through fruition and making itself thereby connatural and proportionate to the object. Love experiences its object with a sort of loving taste, according to the Psalmist,¹⁵ *Taste and see*. In this way the one loving takes on the condition of his object, that is, through the affective experience the object is rendered more conformed, proportioned and united to the person, more suitable to him. For this reason, the intellect is carried toward the object as something experienced, brought into agreement with it, as it were. In this sense, love is not considered precisely as moving, rather it belongs in the genus of objective cause, since through experience the object is diversely proportioned and made suitable to the intellect.

12. An objection: Love and affection cannot experience more in an object than knowledge provides. Therefore, even before the union of love and intimate affective experience there is presupposed a knowledge of the thing to be experienced and loved. What

¹⁵ *Psalm xxxiii, 9.*

is this knowledge? Is it Wisdom, is it Faith, or is it something else? If it is Wisdom, it precedes love and is not founded upon the taste or experience of the object. If it is Faith, then wisdom knows no more than Faith. The whole postulate of such love would have already occurred with Faith. If it is something other than Wisdom and Faith, what is it?

13. Reply: Love or affection cannot experience more in the object than is presented to the will, since it cannot be attracted to a thing which is not proposed to it. Nevertheless, in its manner of attaining the object, the will can be united to an object and experience it in a better way than that proposed by the intellect. For the intellect proposes things obscurely and with a certain amount of imperfection. On the other hand, the will is attracted to the object as it is in itself. Such is the case with Charity, even when God is known only obscurely through Faith. Furthermore, the will sometimes desires all the more fervently to see a thing in itself and enjoy it, when the object of its desire is hidden under a veil. For the object is proposed to the will in some extrinsic testimony and not as it is in itself. It is offered under a veil in such a way that more lies hidden than is known. The very fact that the greater part of the object lies hidden arouses the will to a greater desire. The affections are united to the object which the intellect does not know how to propose.

14. Upon this basis, St. Thomas¹⁶ shows that Charity is more excellent than Faith, since Faith, which is of the unseen, attains to God only obscurely and at a distance. But Charity attains to God immediately as He is in Himself, intimately uniting itself to Him although He lies hidden in Faith. Despite the fact that Faith regulates love and the union with God, inasmuch as it proposes the object, nevertheless, as a result of the union with God there is an immediate loving contact in which the intellect is moved to judge of divine things in a way superior to that offered by Faith. It penetrates and knows that there is more hidden in the things of Faith than Faith itself manifests. The soul loves more, tastes more with its affections, and through its fullness judges what it knows of divine things in a higher way. Meanwhile it rests upon an experiential love and an impulse of the Holy Ghost moving

¹⁶ I-II, Q. 66, a. 6 and II-II, Q. 23, a. 6.

the intellect and giving it a higher certitude in a higher way than the naked testimony of Faith.

15. The response to the argument that the will does not add greater light to the intellect should be clear from what has been noted above. The will does not formally illuminate the intellect. However, it can causally furnish the intellect with greater light, in so far as love makes the object more united to the soul, more immediately attached to it and tasted by it. Thus the object is presented anew to the intellect with a different suitability and proportion to the will. The object is felt as if by an immediate experience. From this arises an understanding that what is thus felt in love is higher and more excellent than any consideration of Faith, or any other known truth. Thus the intellect proceeds to judge of these things and divine truths according as it knows them in this loving experience of God, which is more exalted than a consideration of God by any amount of human effort. Such an experience of divine things through union and love makes the object knowable in a way quite different from any other light or from the testimony of Faith. The formal diversity of object in this knowledge is caused by the unifying function of love: the object is united to the knower and experienced by him.

16. Although this taste and enjoyment naturally and necessarily results from love, it is not natural in the sense of being in the natural order. It is a supernatural enjoyment and taste, following upon attainment of a supernatural love, and regulated by the supernatural knowledge through Faith in this life and Vision in heaven. It is not repugnant, therefore, that a supernatural gift should be founded upon such knowledge. The supernatural experience of God is derived from the Spirit, and mystical, loving Wisdom flows accordingly from the union of the soul with God.

17. The formal distinction between the Gift of Wisdom and Faith and the other gifts may be derived from what has already been noted. That the Gift is distinct from the acquired intellectual virtues is already manifest. The Gift of Wisdom proceeds from a motion and supernatural impulse of the Holy Ghost. Consequently, it is formally supernatural. It has a connaturality and loving experience of divine things. On the other hand, the virtue of wisdom is a result of natural speculation and effort.

18. *A posteriori*, the distinction of the Gift of Wisdom from Faith is easily ascertainable, since the two are separable. Faith is found in sinners who have not grace. The Gift of Wisdom is found only in the just: *For wisdom will not enter into a malicious soul, nor dwell in a body subject to sins.*¹⁷ Moreover, the Gift of Wisdom but not Faith is found in the blessed, since it is said of Wisdom, *my abode is in the full assembly of saints.*¹⁸

19. *A priori*, the distinction between the Gift of Wisdom and Faith may be derived from their diverse formal aspects. Faith involves a simple assent after the manner of one believing in authority or in the testimony of a witness. It neither inquires into the thing it believes nor understands it through causes. On the other hand, wisdom understands its object through its causes, and judges of it analytically. For Wisdom is the supreme science, knowing a thing through its highest causes. The Gift of Wisdom, therefore, has some knowledge of these highest causes, not indeed in their essence, but through a certain experiential and affective union. According to Our Lord, *If anyone desires to do His will, he will know of the teaching whether it is from God;*¹⁹ and in Ecclesiasticus it is noted: *The love of God is an honorable wisdom. And they to whom she shall show herself love her by the sight, and by the knowledge of her great works.*²⁰

Wisdom, therefore, presupposes the love of God, and is founded upon it. It is a mystical and loving knowledge of divine things. Consequently, it presupposes Faith, which antecedes and regulates love. In heaven, it presupposes the Beatific Vision, from which love and enjoyment arise. Therefore, of its very nature, the Gift of Wisdom is a mystical and loving knowledge which presupposes Faith and is distinguished from it.

20. With this in mind, one may easily understand the words of St. Thomas: ²¹ "The gift of wisdom differs from Faith, because Faith assents to truth taken in itself, but judgment according to divine truth is the province of the Gift of Wisdom. Hence, the Gift of Wisdom presupposes Faith, since each man judges well what he knows, as is mentioned in the first Book of the Ethics."²²

¹⁷ *Wisdom*, i, 4.

¹⁸ *Ecclesiastes*, xxiv, 16.

¹⁹ *John*, vii, 17.

²⁰ *Ecclesiasticus*, i, 14.

²¹ II-II, Q. 45, a. 1.

²² *I Ethics*, c. 3.

That Father Suarez ²³ finds such obscurity and difficulty in these words is really remarkable. It is not apparent to him that assenting to divine truth is different from judging according to divine truth. Apparently oblivious of this distinction made by Cajetan,²⁴ Suarez would object that if judgment is an assent, St. Thomas' reason for distinguishing Faith from Wisdom is not apparent. Faith assents to divine truth as it is in itself, while Wisdom judges according to divine truth. For Suarez this is the same thing, for to assent to divine truth is to assent according to divine truth and because of it. Assent and judgment are the same thing; neither is a broader term than the other. Just as there is assent which is clear or obscure, certain or uncertain, so it is with judgment. Whatever Faith does by assenting, Wisdom does by judging. Both are concerned with the same object; from the point of view of the manner of acting (the formal aspect) there does not seem to be any difference between assent and judgment.

21. The reply may be formulated from the doctrine of the preceding chapter, namely, that there are two kinds of judgment. One is a simple assent, such as is had in the judgment of first principles. Assent is made to these principles from the evidence of the terms. Likewise simple assent is had in Faith. In the judgment that the thing is true, there is no inquiry into the causes of the thing, but merely an assent to the testimony and authority of the witness. The other type of judgment is analytic and scientific. When a man assents to the truth, judges of it, and even gives reasons for his judgment, investigating and defending it, he not only knows the thing, but he knows the foundation and cause of his knowledge. Such an act is proper to science. It is called Wisdom when it is had through the highest causes. One judgment, therefore, is analytic and scientific, the other is not scientific but simple.

The simple judgment without reasoning and investigation of causes pertains to Faith. The scientific and analytic judgment is the province of Wisdom. The words of St. Thomas contain no other "mystery," nor need they bear the exaggerated obscurity and difficulty Father Suarez would heap upon them.

22. The very words of St. Thomas imply what has been stated

²³ *II De Gratia*, c. 18, n. 2 and ff.

²⁴ *Commentaria in II-II*, Q. 45, a. 1.

above. He writes: ²⁵ "It pertains to Wisdom to consider the highest causes, through which it may judge of other things with the greatest certitude and according to which it should order other things." The words "through which" and "according to which" indicate the explanatory reason and analytic judgment of an object through its causes and according to its causes. When St. Thomas adds ²⁶ that "judgment according to divine truth pertains to the Gift of Wisdom," he means an analytic judgment, which judges according to divine truth as through a cause.

Faith does not have such a judgment. One who believes is concerned only with the authority and testimony of the witness; he does not consider the causes upon which that truth is founded. Wherefore, just as it is not insoluble nor difficult nor obscure to distinguish two assents of judgments, one scientific and the other simple, so it is not difficult to consider that St. Thomas attributes one judgment, the simple one, to Faith; the other, the scientific one, to the Gift of Wisdom.

23. There is no force in the argument that it belongs to Faith to judge of divine truth as it is in itself, while it pertains to the Gift of Wisdom to judge according to the divine truth, as if assent were one thing and judgment another. Nor is there any difficulty in this statement. What if, generally speaking, assent and judgment are the same thing? The difference lies in the fact that the assent of Faith is simple and not scientific, while the judgment of Wisdom is analytic and scientific. Hence, these two differ greatly.

This is what St. Thomas wishes to say in his own brief way when he affirms that Faith assents to truth as it is in itself, while the judgment according to divine truth belongs to the Gift of Wisdom. Assent to truth as it is in itself is an immediate and simple assent. But to assent to one truth according to another is to judge of it from its cause. St. Thomas ²⁷ expressly mentioned this in the words, "it pertains to Wisdom to judge through causes and to order other things according to them." If there is need for a more precise statement, it may be found in his *Commentary on the Sentences*: ²⁸ "Faith is a simple knowledge of the articles, which are the principles of the whole of Christian wisdom. The Gift of Wisdom proceeds according to a deiform contemplation and sort

²⁵ II-II, Q. 45, a. 1.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, ad 2.

²⁷ II-II, Q. 45, a. 1.

²⁸ III, d. 35, q. 1, a. 1, ad 1.

of explanation of the articles which Faith holds enveloped according to a human manner (of knowing)."

Therefore, Suarez should have distinguished in Faith the simple assent or judgment, as the assent to first principles, from the scientific assent or judgment in the Gift of Wisdom, which, as it were, explains and evolves these principles and defends them. If he had done this, his exaggerated difficulty would not exist.

24. The distinction of the Gift of Wisdom from the Gifts of Understanding and Counsel is also quite evident. It is distinct from the Gift of Understanding, because the latter does not proceed analytically, any more than does Faith, nor does it treat of causes. Understanding is merely a simple knowledge of terms and a penetration of them in a loving and mystical way. Wisdom is distinct from the Gift of Counsel because the latter is concerned with the government of actions, not with the contemplation of divine things through their ultimate causes proper to Wisdom.

25. According to St. Thomas²⁹ the Gift of Wisdom is distinguished from the Gift of Knowledge, which, although it proceeds analytically, judges through created causes and not the highest causes.

However, the Gift of Knowledge is the science of the saints, found only in those who are in the state of grace, and proceeds from a union with God through Charity. It is difficult to see how Wisdom should be through the highest causes, because it is founded upon that union with God, while Knowledge is not through the highest causes although it is founded upon the same union.

26. The explanation lies in the fact that although Faith knows God primarily, it knows many created things secondarily. One thing can be the reason and cause of another, and Faith and its exercise is something temporal and created. From Faith love and union with God are born primarily, and secondarily a love for neighbor and created things inasmuch as they belong to God. Consequently, a man united to God through love is made easily movable by the Holy Ghost both for understanding and judging divine things and for judging human things. Of the divine he judges according to a love and a union or experience which he has of them. He judges also of creatures through an experience of

²⁹ II-II, Q. 9, a. 2; Q. 45, a. 2 and III, d. 35, 1, 3.

them, either in the affection ordering charity and the love of the creature to God, or in the act of Faith and the virtues, or in the manner of tending to God through a removal of things created. This last cannot be done without a distinction being made between creatures and God. For Wisdom, then, to judge with sufficient reason that God is distinct from creatures, it must have a notion of both God and creatures.

27. In the union with God by grace and Charity, there is sufficient basis for a twofold procedure in understanding and judging divine things. It may proceed through the First Cause Himself, to whom Charity is primarily united, or it may go through human and created causes, to which it is united secondarily and through which it is led back to an understanding of the First Cause. Wisdom, the highest knowledge, is founded upon the first type of understanding and judging. Upon the second is founded ordinary and inferior knowledge. Both presuppose the union of man with his God through love or Charity, and secondarily, a union with his neighbor or creatures through the same Charity. By reason of the first, man is moved by the Holy Ghost to understand and judge of divine things. By reason of the second, he judges from created causes.

In Sacred Scripture there are many examples and reasons for things which belong to either Wisdom or Knowledge. Sometimes Scripture mentions the lesser causes, sometimes the highest. The Apostles asked Our Lord about the cause of the blindness in the man born blind, they wanted to know its lesser or created cause, namely, the sins which would cause such a punishment. They said, *Rabbi, who has sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind.*³⁰ But Our Lord replied through Wisdom by giving the cause of the blindness from the point of view of the Supreme Cause, which is divine glory: *Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents, but the works of God were to be made manifest in him.*³¹

Moreover, the prophet judged of the wonderful things of God through the Gift of Wisdom when he said: *For I do not know how to write about them. I will enter upon a recital of the powers of the Lord; O Lord, I will commemorate Thy justice alone. O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth, and even until now do I declare Thy wondrous deed.*³² Without literary effort, his soul

³⁰ John, ix, 2.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

³² Psalm lxx, 15.

enters upon a recital of the powers of the Lord, and it records His justice alone, as he had been taught from his youth, since *His anointing teaches us concerning all things*.³³ The power of God and His justice (which are the supreme causes), the prophet gives as the reason and cause for the mighty deeds of God, which he announces. This surely pertains to Wisdom. The same prophet, through the Gift of Knowledge, gives the causes of the destruction of sinners from the proximate cause of their sins. *How are they brought to desolation? They have suddenly ceased to be; they have perished by reason of their iniquity*.³⁴ Thus Sacred Scripture, in assigning the causes of these truths, cites examples either of the Gift of Wisdom or of Knowledge. Much insight into these Gifts may be obtained by anyone who grasps the cause of the distinction in Scriptural usage.

28. Finally, the Gift of Wisdom differs from the Gift of Counsel. It is true that Wisdom is directive of actions inasmuch as they are regulated through eternal laws contemplated in Wisdom.³⁵ Nevertheless, over and above this there is need for the Gift of Counsel corresponding to Prudence, which directs the moral virtues. The virtue of Prudence is distinguished from the virtue of Wisdom in this, that Prudence regulates according to human rules acts done here and now. On the other hand, Wisdom is not immediately regulative of action. It is contemplative and knows the Supreme Cause, upon which depends the essential knowledge of the rules and of the actions. Furthermore, it establishes and defends the universal principles upon which such rules depend.

The relation of the Gift of Counsel and the Gift of Wisdom is as follows: The Gift of Counsel directs immediately the actions of the soul moved by the Holy Ghost to choose correctly and well and to find the mean even in things which are very doubtful. It is noted in the Book of the Macabees: *Good counsel came into their minds*.³⁶ The Gift of Wisdom, on the other hand, is not immediately regulative of activity. It contemplates divine things, both as they are in themselves, and, secondarily, as they are the higher rule of action. Activity is still immediately directed by human rules.

29. However, an objection can be raised against this doctrine.

³³ Cf. *I John*, ii, 27.

³⁴ *Psalms* lxxii, 19.

³⁵ II-II, Q. 45, a. 5.

³⁶ *I Macabees*, iv, 45.

It seems impossible that the Gift of Wisdom which has been possessed by a soul for a long time should be obliterated by one mortal sin. Therefore, it can remain in the soul without Charity, and hence is not essentially a loving knowledge, founded upon the union of Charity.

The first statement is proved from the fact that the Gift of Wisdom is exercised by means of ideas which represent an object properly ordered by the light called the Gift of Wisdom. These ideas and their representation and their ordination are not wiped out through a mortal sin. Mortal sin is an aversion of the will, not a destruction of ideas in the intellect. Hence the ideas, and consequently Wisdom, should remain as before.

30. This is confirmed by the fact that even after a mortal sin a person can elicit acts of wisdom the same as before. He understands in the same way and he speculates and judges concerning divine things just as before. Therefore, the Gift of Wisdom remains in sinners. Of course it might be said with St. Thomas³⁷ that not every illumination of the mind constitutes the Gift of Wisdom, but only the one which makes for a correct estimate of the final end, which is found only in those having grace. Yet that estimate is either a speculative estimate of the nature and cause of the ultimate end, or it is a practical estimate, by which one would direct himself to the attainment of his end. The first type of estimate remains in a sinner, for a sinner can have an excellent speculative judgment of the ultimate end. The second estimate pertains to Prudence, by which a man is directed in a practical way in the right estimation of actions. Thus if Wisdom were essentially and primarily practical it would be confused with Counsel.

31. A further corroboration is provided by the fact that the Gift of Wisdom knows truths either with or without a reasoning process. If it is through a process of reasoning, it is founded upon effort and one's own industry. Like theology, then, it can remain in the sinner even after the loss of grace, since sin neither harms nor removes reasoning. If this discourse is had without reasoning, it is not distinguished from the Gift of Understanding, which penetrates truths in a simple intuitive way. In that case it is not

³⁷ II-II, Q. 8, a. 5.

accommodated to human capacity, nor is there any experience of such a scientific mode of knowledge devoid of reasoning.

32. It must be noted in reply that it is most certain that when grace is lost through mortal sin the Wisdom which is a Gift of the Holy Ghost ceases to be. *For wisdom will not enter into a malicious soul, nor dwell in a body subject to sins. For the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee from the deceitful, and will withdraw himself from thoughts that are without understanding, and he shall not abide when iniquity comes in.*³⁸ Therefore, the arrival of iniquity signalizes the departure of the motion of the Holy Ghost. Wisdom will flee from the deceitful. This passage of Scripture cannot be understood of acquired wisdom. For it is a matter of experience that it remains even without grace. Nor is it the charism of wisdom, nor prophecy, which can be found even in sinners. It can be understood, therefore, only of the Gift of Wisdom.

The first premise of the objection was maintained on the ground that the ideas serving Wisdom remain even when charity is no longer present in the soul. This must be conceded. However, these ideas do not remain subject to the impulse and the motion of the Holy Ghost as before, nor do they serve that taste or experience in which the sweetness of the Lord is felt. These ideas remain at the service of Faith, acquired wisdom, or some other light that might be given. Nevertheless, the ordering of ideas, which is had by the Gift of Wisdom through the motion of the Holy Ghost leading the soul to taste and lovingly to experience God, is taken away from thoughts "devoid of understanding." It is destroyed by the intrusion of iniquity, as is mentioned in the Book of Wisdom, since then no longer can the soul lovingly taste and see how sweet is the Lord through such ideas.

What are these thoughts without understanding except the carnal thoughts of a sinner, who has become *like the horse and the mule, who have no understanding; . . . when he was in honor did not understand; he is compared to senseless beasts. . . .*³⁹ If a man can have such thoughts without understanding, what is so extraordinary about his having ideas without the ordination of Wisdom. Although sin is a moral aversion, it has many physical effects at least by way of demerit; it takes away grace and destroys

³⁸ *Wisdom*, i, 4, 5.

³⁹ *Psalms* xxxi, 9; xli, 21.

charity, it wounds the intellect, and drives out the Holy Ghost. It impedes all His friendly motions. Whether it brings about this overthrow physically or by way of demerit is not the present question. It is sufficient to note that all is destroyed by sin.

33. To the assertion⁴⁰ that even after a mortal sin a person judges and speculates of divine things as before, the only answer is that he does not do this through the Gift of Wisdom. He does it through the acquired intellectual virtue of wisdom or through some illumination which is a charism or merely through the memory of past experience, since these ideas can remain in the memory just as the recollection of a good work.

It is impossible, however, that after mortal sin he should contemplate and judge by reason of that taste or internal experience of divine things, since only he who receives it knows that internal sweetness and peace which surpasses all sense, that intoxication of the Spirit and touch of divine union. When the loving experience of the divine union ceases, the experiential act of understanding and judging divine things no longer exists. Therefore, the Gift of Wisdom may cease, while the ideas it employed will not be taken away. In the case of Faith, even if the Faith is destroyed by a sin contrary to Faith, the ideas which it used will remain, as well as the memory of the act of believing exercised in the soul. Some sort of exercise of Faith concerning the other articles of Faith may even remain. Nevertheless, all these things are not the products of supernatural Faith. They come either from human faith or from a remembrance of the former acts of Faith.

34. It is not considered impossible that Faith should be destroyed by one act contrary to it, and that true acts of supernatural Faith can no longer be elicited, although they may seem to be the same as before. Neither is it impossible that one act, one blow of mortal sin should obliterate the Gift of Wisdom, so that there could be no further understanding according to the formality of that Gift. A man might speculate by similar acts of wisdom, either from acquired wisdom or a charism ordained to the enlightenment of others and not to his own internal experience and union. According to the Apostle, *To one through the Spirit is given the utterance of wisdom; and to another the utterance of knowl-*

⁴⁰ Cf. No. 30.

*edge, according to the same Spirit.*⁴¹ St. Thomas⁴² recognizes that this type of wisdom is in those who are not in the state of grace, but it is not to be identified with that state, since the charisms may be found even in sinners. Finally, those acts of wisdom may remain in a sinner through the remembrance of former knowledge, but they are not a taste or experience.

It cannot be inferred from this that anyone who feels this act of the Gift of Wisdom knows clearly that he is in the state of grace. For no one can know clearly that the motion he feels is from the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, although there is a strong suspicion of it.

35. The assertion that the Gift of Knowledge, and by the same token the Gift of Wisdom, is not discursive because it is a participation in divine knowledge is readily answered by the text of St. Thomas.⁴³ "Divine knowledge is not discursive or rational but simple and absolute. The Knowledge which is called the Gift of the Holy Ghost is similar to this, since it is a participated similitude of it." Even if neither the Gift of Knowledge nor the Gift of Wisdom is discursive, there still remains a difference between Understanding and Wisdom. Understanding does not pass from one thing to another, either on the part of the thing known or on the part of the manner of knowing. It proceeds by apprehending principles and penetrates them from a knowledge of the terms. These terms are not subject to analysis. The manner of knowing is not analytical but apprehensive of truth by a simple treatment. On the other hand, Knowledge and Wisdom proceed analytically, at least from the point of view of the thing known. They proceed in an orderly manner through either the highest or lesser causes and they give a reason for the truth which they know. On the part of the one knowing, however, there is no discourse. Similarly, the Angels have analytic knowledge since they know a thing through its causes although they know both the cause and the effect without multiple speculative acts.

36. Whether the Gifts of Knowledge and Wisdom are such that they lack speculation to the extent that it is not present either by reason of the nature of the Gift or by reason of the imperfection of the subject in this life, is not altogether certain. It would not seem

⁴¹ *I Corinthians*, xii, 9.

⁴² II-II, Q. 45, a. 5.

⁴³ II-II, Q. 9, a. 1, ad 1.

absurd to affirm that the Gifts are not of themselves speculative, but can admit of speculation because of human imperfection in this life, to which the Gift must accommodate itself. Certainly St. Thomas merely stated that the Gift of Knowledge is like divine knowledge because it is simple and not discursive. This would still be true if it were not discursive by nature although by reason of the imperfection of the subject it admitted of some pondering of its object.

St. Thomas has written ⁴⁴ of the infused knowledge of Christ that He could use it with a discourse or without it. Our Lord actually used a rational process when he asked Peter from whom the kings of the earth received tribute, from their own sons or from others. Peter replied, *From others*. Our Lord then inferred, *The sons then are exempt*.⁴⁵

It is evident that infused knowledge is a participation of divine knowledge which is not discursive. Even the Gift of Wisdom is found within the scope of infused knowledge, since the latter extends to everything known outside the Beatific Vision. For this reason, it would not seem impossible that the Gift of Wisdom as well as the Gift of Knowledge embraces both aspects. Of their nature they could elevate the mind to understand without formal deduction, but on the part of the one knowing they can use deduction, because of the fact that the subject is not properly disposed and only imperfectly participates its light.

The Objects of the Gift of Wisdom

37. Father Suarez ⁴⁶ makes much ado about the matter of the objects of the Gift of Wisdom. He postulates a twofold manner of speaking. In his opinion, Wisdom is concerned with conclusions deduced from the principles of Faith. This is done in such a way that Faith offers the principles, while Wisdom is concerned with the conclusions. Secondly, he holds that Wisdom is concerned with the dogmas of Faith—especially those concerned directly with God—and this on a par with Faith.

38. Moreover, Suarez finds difficulties in both of these positions. He experiences difficulty with the first because in that case Wisdom would in no way differ from theology, except perhaps by reason of

⁴⁴ III, Q. 11, a. 3.

⁴⁵ *Matthew*, xvii, 25.

⁴⁶ *II De Gratia*, c. 18, no. 5 ff.

the fact that the Gift of Wisdom is infused while theology is acquired. This is an accidental difference, on the part of the extrinsic cause, and hence not essential to the nature of Wisdom. He likewise finds difficulty in the second position because there would then be no differentiation between Wisdom and Faith, which is an assent to divine truth in obscure belief. The Gift of Wisdom also assents in obscurity, for it has no experience of evidence. The difference which Cajetan finds between assent and judgment is rejected by Suarez as impossible.

39. For this reason, Suarez feels that Faith and Wisdom coalesce under the aspect of assent and judgment. They would differ only because Faith judges simply that a thing is truly revealed and true because it is revealed. Wisdom, on the other hand, does not judge whether the thing revealed is true or false; it merely judges of divine things in so far as they are suitable objects of love and belief. To anyone who objects that Faith also judges that the things of Faith are worthy of belief, and that supernatural mysteries are entirely congruous, Suarez would reply that Faith does not do this directly. The only direct function of Faith is to believe these things because they have been revealed by God. Wisdom judges by an intuition of these things, or by reason of suitableness or loveliness, or some other property in their effects. This judgment is in accord with a certain connaturality or love, which Wisdom presupposes. It seems to seize upon an experience of the thing, since love makes it give more attention and consideration to its beloved object. Finally, Suarez distinguishes the act of Wisdom from the act of Faith on the grounds that Wisdom is not the belief of truth, but that it presupposes belief and consists in a sort of experimental knowledge of the truth believed.

40. Despite all this, it must be maintained that the Gift of Wisdom judges of everything that falls under Faith. For St. Paul writes, *The spiritual man judges of all things*.⁴⁷ St. Thomas⁴⁸ applied this passage to the Gift of Wisdom through which a man becomes spiritual and is moved by the Spirit in a special way. Hence St. Thomas is of the opinion that Wisdom treats of the same matter as Faith and that it attains an explicit contemplation

⁴⁷ *II Corinthians*, ii, 15.

⁴⁸ II-II, Q. 45, a. 1 and III, d. 36, 1, 1.

of the articles of Faith which Faith proposes in a confused manner. For this reason, St. Thomas ⁴⁹ concludes: "This gift is principally concerned with divine things and with others only in so far as through the divine it can judge of all." Elsewhere ⁵⁰ he teaches that Wisdom extends to things divine and human and is both speculative and practical. Therefore, according to St. Thomas the Gift of Wisdom judges both of divine and human and created things, though its principal concern is with the divine. It thus extends to all things upon which Faith and theology touch.

41. The reason for this is derived from the nature of this Gift and from the proportionate likeness it bears to the virtue of wisdom. The formal reason by which Wisdom judges truth is the Supreme Cause which is God, in so far as He is known by a certain experiential and loving union in an interior taste. Known in this way, God is the cause of the knowledge of divine things and the supernatural mysteries, as well as created objects, whose cause is God, and with which Faith is concerned. For the teaching of Faith causes love and the affection of Charity. It unites the soul to God and makes the soul love creatures because of God. Faith cannot judge God in this life except by removing from Him the imperfections of creatures and whatever has the connotation of being created. Moreover, it has a judgment that distinguishes between God and creatures. Therefore, it is fitting that the Gift of Wisdom should attain divine things, and judge them, and at the same time judge creatures under a divine aspect.

The same thing is proved from the similarity of the Gift and the virtue of wisdom. The virtue of wisdom deduces conclusions from the supreme causes. Furthermore, it judges principles reflexively to defend them. In the same way, the Gift of Wisdom, which has for its principles the truths of Faith, should be concerned with these conclusions and created truths. Moreover, it should defend the principles of Faith and reflect upon them. In this way it should judge of the dogmas of Faith.

42. It does not follow from this that the Gift of Wisdom is not specifically and substantially different from acquired theology, as Suarez infers when he claims that they differ only in the manner of acquisition, theology being acquired by human effort and the

⁴⁹ III, d. 36, quaestiunc. 2.

⁵⁰ II-II, Q. 45, a. 3.

Gift from an impulse of the Holy Ghost. The contrary is true, for the Gift of Wisdom is not theology incidentally infused, nor is it of the same nature as the theology acquired by sweat and study in school. It is mystical and loving wisdom, which judges of divine things by an internal experience and taste.

St. Thomas⁵¹ does not distinguish the virtue of wisdom (theology) from the Gift of Wisdom on the extrinsic grounds that one is infused and the other acquired. This would not sufficiently distinguish the natures of the two habits to indicate that one is a virtue and the other a Gift. It would leave open the possibility of both being acquired, or even that they are the same virtue, one of which happened to be infused.

The distinction then between theology and the Gift of Wisdom lies in the fact that theology is concerned with truths which have been virtually revealed and are deduced from the principles of Faith in a metaphysical and speculative manner. For this reason, theology frequently uses natural propositions, especially from metaphysics. It uses them merely to apprehend and judge the nature of truths, and can be found in the just and in sinners alike.

The Gift of Wisdom, however, is not concerned with what has been virtually revealed and what is known in its essence through a metaphysical discourse, but with what is known in affection as knowable and lovable in accord with an interior taste and experience. Accordingly, it is called the science of the saints, found only in one who has received it from God. Such Wisdom is not found in a soul given to evil. Infused, like the virtues, by reason of its supernatural object, it is likewise infused because of the supernatural experiential love upon which it is founded, and because of the motion or impulse of the Holy Ghost by which it is led to judge divine things through an interior union and experience.

43. Despite Suarez's opinion, it is not true that the Gift of Wisdom judges only of divine truths, and of them only in so far as their suitability is concerned, that is, their worthiness of belief and love. Wisdom attains to this, but this aspect seems to pertain more to a practical judgment in which divine things are judged worthy of love. Because it is a motive of love, it is a pious affection which precedes Faith and is regulated by the knowledge determining what things are worthy of love.

⁵¹ II-II, Q. 45, a. 2.

Wisdom is also contemplative, according to the Apostle: *We all with faces unveiled, reflecting as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into his very image from glory to glory, as through the Spirit of the Lord.*⁵² Through the transformation and the union of the soul with God, the Spirit of the Lord brings about an experience of divine things from glory to glory. That glory is reflected, since *not knowing how to write about them* (that is, not having human wisdom) *he entered upon a recital of the powers of the Lord and commemorated his justice alone.*⁵³ Is this merely to know that divine things are worthy of belief and love? Is it not rather to enter upon the divine truths themselves and to feast upon the fatness of the grain? Our Lord said to the Jews: *He who would do the will of Him who sent me will know of the doctrine whether it has come from God.*⁵⁴ Any fulfilling the will of God from divine Charity proves the doctrine to be divine and true, not only as worthy of belief and love, but as truly derived from God. The experience of divine things includes both loveliness and credibility and the fact that these truths are divine in themselves.

44. Objection: Wisdom judges of truths which have been deduced from principles. It does not then have as its object divine truths in themselves, since they are the principles of Faith. Therefore, either it is concerned with virtually revealed truths, as is theology, or not all divine truths are its object.

The premises of this argument seem certain. The judgment of wisdom is not simple. It proceeds through a resolution to causes, indeed to the Supreme Cause. Therefore, it proceeds from some principles. The inference is evident, since the highest causes from which wisdom judges are divine things. Therefore, it does not judge of them nor regard them as its objects, but rather as its causes and principles.

45. This objection is confirmed by the fact that the Gift of Wisdom remains in heaven. But it cannot judge of divine things or defend them or even reflect upon them in heaven, since divine things are then known in the Beatific Vision upon which there can be no reflection or judgment or defense. The things seen there are clearly seen, since this Vision is above all visions. Therefore, at least in heaven the Gift of Wisdom is not concerned with divine things.

⁵² II Corinthians, iii, 18.

⁵³ Cf. Psalm lxx, 15.

⁵⁴ Cf. John, vii, 17.

46. In reply it should be noted that this argument can be directed against the virtue of wisdom and acquired theology as well as against the Gift of Wisdom. For Wisdom proceeds from principles in such a way that it reflects upon the principles, not indeed by proving them, but by explaining and defending them from contrary arguments. Theology is concerned with divine things. From a few truths about God it proves others. Still others it explains and defends. For the mystery of the Trinity, of the Incarnation, of the Eucharist, and the like, are as first principles. The virtue of wisdom does not prove them; it merely explains and defends them against errors. However, it does prove some divine attributes and their reasons, since it deduces eternity from immutability, knowledge from immateriality, will from intellect, and the like.

47. The fact that all these truths and divine attributes pertain to the primary object of Faith, or to the primary object of vision, should offer no difficulty. Nor does it seem impossible that there should be proofs concerning these truths through Wisdom, even though this science never proves its primary object. Many things which are immediately matters of Faith can be proved and explained through other truths and principles of Faith. For example, the Apostle ⁵⁵ proved our resurrection from the Resurrection of Christ; nevertheless, both of them are matters of Faith. In God, the primary object of Faith, it is not inconsistent to prove one truth by another, although both are immediately matters of Faith. From the fact that God is One, it is proved that the Son should be consubstantial with the Father lest there be a division in the divine nature. From the fact that God is infinite it is proved that He is omnipotent. Moreover, because He knows, He also wills. Although all these truths belong to the primary object of Faith, as well as of the Vision, which is God, they are truths and reasons so connected one with another that one can be inferred and explained by the other. From one miracle and mystery is gleaned an explanation for another. The virginity of Mary in giving birth to Christ is explained by His departing from the tomb sealed with a stone. In this way, it is not inconsistent that many truths and reasons should concur in the same primary object, though one may virtually include or explain or manifest another.

⁵⁵ *I Corinthians*, xv, 12.

Similarly, one principle proves another, not by an essential and intrinsic medium, since principles are self-evident propositions which need no medium of demonstration.⁵⁶ Rather, one principle explains another by an extrinsic medium, by an explanation from a similar principle or an example. This may also occur when many inadequate reasons mutually concur in one nature or essence in such a way that one may be inferred from the other. Yet each ought to pertain to the integrity of the essence, its definition or principle. A case in point is the inference of the spirituality and immortality of the soul from the fact that it is rational.

Wisdom, therefore, reflects upon its principles not by proving them through middle terms or from intrinsic principles, as it might prove conclusions, but by explaining them from other principles used as extrinsic or similar mediums, or within the same nature by inferring one inadequate reason from another.

48. The reply to the confirmation of this objection⁵⁷ is based upon the fact that in heaven God and divine things are known in the Beatific Vision through morning knowledge, and effects and illuminations outside the Vision through evening knowledge. The blessed are not deprived of the knowledge of things in themselves. They continually receive illuminations of divine mysteries just as the lower Angels are illuminated and taught by the higher. This illumination is not part of the eternal and immutable Beatific Vision, which cannot increase nor become more luminous. Therefore, things as they are in themselves are illuminated outside the Beatific Vision. It is the function of Wisdom, then, to judge of divine things outside the Beatific Vision through its effects, and to reflect upon them and defend them through a connaturality and union with them. It functions just as in this life, in which it lacks a judgment or defense or reflection upon the Beatific Vision itself.

The Distinction Between the Gift of Knowledge and the Other Gifts and Virtues

49. Much of the subject matter of the present section can be gathered from what has been written concerning the Gifts of Understanding and Wisdom. There are three items to be recapitulated here: first, the nature and "formal cause" of the Gift of Knowl-

⁵⁶ Cf. *I Posterior Analytics*.

⁵⁷ Cf. No. 45.

edge; secondly, its proper act and its distinctive characteristic; and thirdly, its objects.

50. The Gift of Knowledge, like the other Gifts, should be considered on the basis of a proportion between it and the virtue of the same name. The virtue of knowledge is a habit which judges truths evidently knowable through causes or effects. Within its scope it includes knowledge of the reason for a thing (*propter quid*), knowledge of the fact (*quia*), knowledge derived from the nature (*a priori*), and knowledge derived from effects (*a posteriori*). When this knowledge is culled from inferior or created causes, it is called science; when it is had through the highest causes, it is called the highest science or wisdom. According to St. Augustine,⁵⁷ "Wisdom is attributed to divine and eternal things, science to the human and temporal." However, St. Augustine is not referring to the matter, or to the thing understood, but to the formal aspect of the act of understanding.⁵⁸ For as far as the object understood is concerned, it is not repugnant that Wisdom should descend to inferior things, nor that science should ascend from effects and inferior causes to God Himself.

51. From the foregoing is derived the distinction between the Gift of Knowledge and the Gift of Wisdom. In the opinion of St. Augustine:⁵⁹ "According to the distinction which the Apostle laid down,⁶⁰ to some is given the utterance of wisdom, to others the utterance of knowledge; the Gifts should be so divided, that the knowledge of divine things is called wisdom, and the knowledge of human things receives the name of knowledge." Therefore, just as the virtue of wisdom and the virtue of knowledge are distinguished by reason of their diverse natures, since one proceeds from proximate causes, the other from the highest, in the same way, the Gift of Wisdom is distinguished from the Gift of Knowledge. It is to be presupposed, of course, that both judge and proceed in an analytic manner.⁶¹

52. There is a special difficulty with the Gift of Knowledge.

⁵⁷ Cf. No. 45.

⁵⁸ *XIII De Trinitate*, c. 19. P. L. xlii, 1032.

⁵⁹ Cf. II-II, Q. 9, a. 2, ad 3.

⁶⁰ *XIV De Trinitate*, c. 1. P. L. xlii, 1037.

⁶¹ Cf. *supra* 24 and 25.

How does it know created and inferior causes in order to judge of their truth? That it knows them supernaturally is certain, since it is a Gift of the Holy Ghost coming from His supernatural motion and impulse. By reason of its special mode the Gift is elevated above even the infused virtues and is called in a special way a Gift of the Holy Ghost. The supernatural light by which these things are known is either:

- a) Faith alone by which the things are believed, or
- b) an experience arising from an internal love—just as wisdom experiences divine things, and because of the experience goes on to taste and contact, or
- c) a special infused light, by which these truths are known, as infused knowledge was in Christ.

This third possibility is evidently not to be entertained, since there is no experience or knowledge of such a light in the faithful.

The first light would not be sufficient. Knowledge of that kind would merely tend to truths virtually contained in revelation and attainable only through a scientific process. The Gift would then not differ from theology, which is concerned with truths virtually revealed and capable of scientific deductions. It would merely admit of a difference arising from the fact that knowledge would be called a gift because infused, while theology would be a virtue, acquired through effort. If that were true, anyone in the state of grace would be a theologian. For he would have the science of theology because he had the Gift of Knowledge which would proceed in the same way as theology.

The second possibility, an experience arising from love, could never occur. The soul may experience divine things through love and union with God, but this leads to the Gift of Wisdom. There is no such experience as supernatural union with created things and inferior causes from which the Gift of Knowledge could take its origin. The taste and experience of created and human things can be had without anything supernatural; in fact, it is hard to see how it could be brought about by anything supernatural. Hence, experience of created things does not cause the Gift of Knowledge. Therefore, the love and experience of created things from which the Gift of Knowledge proceeds does not require anything supernatural.

53. In this matter, Father Suarez ⁶² proceeds in the same way as before. He affirms that the Gift of Knowledge does not judge the truth or falsity of matters of Faith but only their suitableness, either with respect to God or to men. It may even be with respect to Faith itself, inasmuch as the truth is judged worthy of Faith, or with respect to love, if the object is considered worthy of love.

In Suarez's opinion there seems to be no difference between Wisdom and Knowledge. He affirmed the same doctrine concerning Wisdom,⁶³ namely, that Wisdom does not judge of the truth or falsity of the truth revealed by Faith but that it does judge of divine things—which surely are revealed truths—in so far as they are suitable, credible, and lovable. What difference is there between Wisdom and Knowledge? Both judge not of the truths revealed but of their suitableness, either on the part of God or on the part of men, in so far as they are worthy of Faith or love. Perhaps Suarez might admit that Wisdom judges that divine things are worthy of belief and love through superior and divine causes, while knowledge judges through inferior and created causes. This is indeed true, but it does not answer the difficulty. An explanation must be given of how created things are supernaturally known and united to the soul, so that judgment may be made through them. Again, there must be an answer to the question of why Knowledge can penetrate to the truths themselves and not merely to an extrinsic suitableness—as has been considered in the case of wisdom.

54. According to St. Thomas: ⁶⁴ “Although the subject matter of Faith is divine and eternal things, nevertheless, Faith itself is something temporal in the soul of the one believing. Hence to know what should be believed pertains to the Gift of Knowledge. To know the things believed as they are in themselves through a union with them belongs to the Gift of Wisdom.” The objection to which St. Thomas is replying in this passage is derived from the phrase of St. Augustine: ⁶⁵ “through knowledge Faith is born, nourished and defended.” But Faith is concerned with divine things; so too, then, is Knowledge.

⁶² Cf. *II De Gratia*, c. 20.

⁶⁴ II-II, Q. 9, a. 2.

⁶³ Cf. *ibid.*, c. 18.

⁶⁵ *XIV De Trinitate*, c. 1. *P. L.* xlii, 1087.

In another response to this objection⁶⁶ St. Thomas teaches that "from human things the knowledge of divine things is nourished and defended, since *the invisible things of God are clearly seen being known through the things that are made.*"⁶⁷ In this latter solution to the objection St. Thomas seems to give a greater scope to the Gift of Knowledge, extending it to all knowledge from human and created things ordered to the knowledge of the invisible things of God. In the first answer he seems to restrict this knowledge to a created thing, not the object of Faith but Faith as it is found in the soul of the one believing. Such an excessive restriction of the object of the Gift of Knowledge would reduce it to a mere reflex action, namely, to a knowledge of Faith, as something temporal in the soul of the one believing.

55. There does not seem to be much truth in such a restriction of the scope of the Gift of Knowledge. For, according to St. Thomas,⁶⁸ "the Gift of Knowledge is concerned with human things, or created things." Again he teaches⁶⁹ that in the first place there corresponds "to the Gift of Knowledge a sorrow for past errors, and consequently some consolation, since through his right judgment, a man directs creatures to the divine good." This surely indicates something more than the knowledge of Faith as a temporal object in the soul of the believer.

Moreover, grace and Charity are not necessary for a knowledge of Faith as it is exercised in the soul of the one believing. For Faith may be practiced even by a sinner. Yet the Gift of Knowledge is found only in those who are in the state of grace. Therefore, this Gift is not restricted to a knowledge of the Faith as it is in the soul of the one who believes. It extends to whatever is created and knowable through Faith. The example concerning the knowledge of Faith as it is in the soul of a believer was used by St. Thomas so that he might reply in the very words of the objection. He wished to show that even if Faith unto salvation is begotten through knowledge, there is still room for it to proceed through human and created causes, since Faith itself and the act of belief are temporal and hence the concern of knowledge.

56. However,⁷⁰ the Gift of Knowledge likewise belongs to mysti-

⁶⁶ III, d. 35, q. 2, a. 2, quaestiunc. 1 ad 1.

⁶⁷ *Romans*, i, 20.

⁶⁸ II-II, Q. 9, a. 2.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, a. 4, ad 1.

⁷⁰ Solution of the difficulty expressed in No. 52.

cal and loving knowledge. The *Knowledge* mentioned in Scripture is not just of any sort of knowledge. It is the spirit of Knowledge, the knowledge of the saints, since it is found only in those who are in the state of grace. Founded upon a motion of the Holy Ghost, it moves the mind not by a pure and naked light manifesting exterior truths, but by an internal experience, by a sort of loving and supernatural connaturality to the things that it judges.

57. Moreover, Charity, which unites the soul's love to God, is primarily concerned with God and divine things, and secondarily with creatures as they are ordained to God. Hence Charity provides love with a connatural union and an experiential taste of God. At the same time love has a taste and experience of creatures. It forms a correct judgment concerning them, both to despise them, lest the soul should be distracted by them, and to love them moderately, ordaining them to God. In the words of the Apostle, *Do you seek a proof of the Christ who speaks in me?*⁷¹ *For this I have suffered the loss of all things, and I count them as dung, that I may gain Christ.*⁷² Flight from creatures and a knowledge of their limitations, bitterness, and nothingness are very conducive to the perfect union with God and an experience of His immense goodness. Consideration of creatures often helps the soul to adhere more firmly to God, since He is known by stripping off the imperfections which are found in creatures. The Apostle had an excellent judgment of creatures: *For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*⁷³ He shows in this passage the sort of judgment of creatures that is born of the Charity of God, lest either desire for them or fear of them should separate anyone from the love of God. An experience and taste of creatures as well as an insight concerning them are given to the soul, not that it may rest in them as its ultimate end, but that it may proceed through them to God with a correct estimate and judgment of its last end. Only he who has a correct appraisal of his last end can relate God and creatures, *know and see how evil and bitter it is to forsake God.*⁷⁴ Jeremias employed the Gift of Knowledge when he admonished

⁷¹ II Corinthians, xiii, 3.

⁷² Philippians, iii, 7.

⁷³ Romans, viii, 38.

⁷⁴ Jeremias, ii, 19.

the people to *know* (that is, through knowledge) *and see that it is evil to abandon the Lord your God*. Likewise another prophet proclaims: *The wicked have told me idle tales which are not according to your law.*⁷⁵ The soul says in returning to God: *I will go and return to my first husband because it was better with me then than now,*⁷⁶ and again, *Behold we come to thee: for thou art the Lord our God. Verily the hills were liars, and the multitude of mountains, truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel.*⁷⁷ All these passages, then, evidence knowledge of creatures ascending to God through the Gift of Knowledge.

58. Therefore, there is such a thing as a judgment from the motion of the Holy Ghost with an ordered love of God and creatures, which distinguishes between God and creatures through a right estimate of the latter, *lest they should be a trap for the feet of the foolish.*⁷⁸ This right judgment of creatures is the knowledge of the saints, founded upon the spiritual taste and affection of Charity. It rests in God and overflows to creatures because of God. It forms a judgment according to properties which belong to inferior causes. Consequently, Knowledge is distinguished from Wisdom, which proceeds through the highest causes to which it is essentially and primarily united through Charity.

59. The distinction of the Gift of Knowledge from Faith, from Counsel, and from acquired knowledge can be gleaned from the foregoing paragraphs. It is distinguished from Faith in the same way as it is distinguished from Wisdom. The distinction can be proved by an *a posteriori* argument. The Gift of Knowledge, like Wisdom, remains in heaven where there is no Faith. Moreover, Faith can be found in sinners lacking the Gift of Knowledge. The same distinction can be reached by an *a priori* argument. The Gift of Knowledge judges of the lesser causes of things. Faith simply believes the testimony of God and does not inquire into causes. Finally, the Gift of Knowledge comes from a loving union with God, not indeed as He is in Himself, but as He is the reason for loving creatures in an orderly way and acting correctly in their regard.

Moreover, the Gift of Knowledge is distinguished from Counsel.

⁷⁵ *Psalms* cxviii, 85.

⁷⁷ *Jeremias*, iii, 22, 23.

⁷⁶ *Osee*, ii, 7.

⁷⁸ *Wisdom*, xiv, 11.

The judgment of Knowledge is not purely practical. It is speculative and resolves things to their causes. Therefore, it is not immediately and precisely concerned with actions, as is the case with Prudence and Counsel.

The Gift of Knowledge is also distinguished from the acquired virtue of the same name, because the Gift is supernatural and founded upon an interior experience and taste of spiritual things. The Gift of Knowledge is loving and mystical. It is not acquired by human effort nor does it strive to know the natures of things by the naked light of rational discourse. It seeks the differences of things from God in love.

60. Finally, the objects of the Gift of Knowledge do not differ materially from the objects of Faith or the objects of the Gifts of Wisdom and Understanding. However, in its formal aspects or motives there is a difference. For Wisdom, although it is principally concerned with divine things, judges of human and created things (*the spiritual man judges all things*).⁷⁹ Yet it does this by proceeding through the highest cause and by adhering to divine things.⁸⁰ And Knowledge, although it proceeds from created causes, can attain to divine things through them, since *the invisible things of God are clearly seen being known through the things that are made*.⁸¹

According to St. Thomas,⁸² "since man knows God through His creatures, this seems to pertain to knowledge, to which it belongs formally, rather than to Wisdom, to which it belongs materially: and conversely, when we judge of creatures according to divine things, this pertains to wisdom rather than to knowledge." Wisdom is concerned with human affairs by descending to them from God. The Gift of Understanding, in a simple judgment, penetrates terms and apprehends what each thing is, at least through a denial of imperfection, though not by a resolution to causes. The Gift of Knowledge, however, considers divine truths by arising from creatures to God or by making a comparison between God and creatures. Consequently, it is evident that in the doctrine of St. Thomas the scope of the Gift of Knowledge is not restricted to the temporal element in the act of Faith.

⁷⁹ *I Corinthians*, ii, 15.

⁸⁰ Cf. II-II, Q. 45, a. 1.

⁸¹ *Romans*, i, 20.

⁸² II-II, Q. 9, a. 3, ad 3.

CHAPTER V *

The Gift of Counsel

1. The Gift of Counsel is related to the virtue of Prudence, for it belongs to Prudence to take counsel. Its being called the Gift of Counsel rather than the Gift of Prudence indicates more clearly the divine motion or impulse by which a man is moved according to the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. According to St. Thomas: ¹ "Since in the Gifts of the Holy Ghost the human mind is not a mover, but rather a thing moved, it was not fitting that the Gift related to prudence should be called Precept or Judgment, but Counsel, which signifies the motion of a mind counselled by an adviser."

2. Among the difficulties surrounding the Gift of Counsel the problem of distinguishing it from Faith, from the Gift of Knowledge, and from supernatural Prudence takes first place. It seems

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OUTLINE OF CHAPTER V

The Gift of Counsel

I. THE NAME AND NATURE OF THE GIFT OF COUNSEL

- A. The name Counsel (1)
- B. The difficulties involved in a treatment of Counsel
 - 1. First difficulty—Distinction between Counsel, Faith, etc. (2)
 - 2. Second difficulty—The object of Counsel (3)
 - 3. Third difficulty—The act of Counsel (4)

II. THE NATURE OF COUNSEL—SOLUTION OF THE FIRST DIFFICULTY

- A. In the opinion of some theologians (5)
- B. Criticism of the opinion in the light of Thomistic principles (6)
- C. The general principle of Thomistic solution (7)
 - 1. Founded on Scripture (8 and 9)
 - 2. Founded on reason (10)
- D. The particularized answer to the first difficulty
 - 1. To the first part—on Faith (11)
 - a) Corollary objection (12)
 - b) Reply (13)
 - 2. To the second part—on Wisdom and Knowledge (14)
 - 3. To the third part—on infused Prudence (15)

that these habits can do whatever Counsel does. Consequently, either Counsel is not distinguished from them or it is superfluous.

That Faith can do the work of Counsel seems evident from the fact that Faith is eminently practical, extending to actions, if indeed it is a Faith operating through love. Faith, then, can direct activity and supereminently perform the office of Prudence.

Likewise, even the Gifts of Knowledge and Wisdom, being at once speculative and practical, extend to the direction of activity. Since these Gifts come from a motion of the Holy Ghost and exceed the ordinary manner of knowing and directing, they should be sufficient for acts above those common to the human mode.² Yet even if another special sort of counsel is necessary, why would not infused Prudence suffice? Such Prudence is a virtue regulated by Faith and the Gifts of Knowledge and Wisdom through their relation to action. Moreover, infused Prudence is of supernatural value and intended for extraordinary cases which exceed the common manner of action. It is strengthened by *gnome*, one of the virtues annexed to Prudence, which directs actions exceeding the ordinary standards. In supernatural or infused Prudence, this auxiliary virtue directs actions according to a special supernatural motion of the Holy Ghost. Why, then, is it necessary to postulate a Gift of the Holy Ghost called Counsel?

III. THE OBJECT OF COUNSEL—SOLUTION OF THE SECOND DIFFICULTY

- A. The Thomistic Solution in general (16)
- B. The particularized answer to this second difficulty
 - 1. The need for the Gift (17)
 - 2. The Twofold Object of the Gift (18)

IV. THE ACT OF COUNSEL—SOLUTION OF THE THIRD DIFFICULTY

- A. The scope of Counsel
 - 1. For certitude (19)
 - 2. For taking Counsel from others (20)
 - 3. For acting in accord with the Church (21)
 - 4. For counselling others (22)
- B. The answer to the objections (23)
- C. Extraordinary cases (24)
- D. Proof of the "Spirit of God" (25)

¹ II-II, q. 52, a. 2, ad 1.

² Cf. II-II, q. 9 and q. 45.

3. The second difficulty has to do with the object of the Gift of Counsel. Does Counsel extend to all action, or does it extend only to actions performed by the will in conjunction with the sensitive appetite? In other words, do the Gifts of Piety, Fortitude, and Fear require a special type of advice through a Gift? It would seem that these acts are often performed without a special Gift or impulse of the Holy Ghost. For although the Gifts are necessary for salvation and are found in all the just,³ all apparently do not obtain the Gift of Counsel from the Holy Ghost. Many need to seek advice from others, since they cannot direct or govern themselves, especially in arduous or extraordinary actions. This certainly seems to indicate that they do not have the Gift of the Holy Ghost. For if they were ruled from within by His special impulse, they would not need to seek advice from others.

4. A third difficulty arises concerning the act of the Gift of Counsel. Counsel is intended to remove all doubt and uncertainty concerning things to be done. Hence, the Gift of Counsel brings with it interior certitude that its knowledge comes from the Holy Ghost, or that it does not. If one does not know that his knowledge comes from the Holy Ghost, he remains just as uncertain and doubtful as before and has to have recourse to the rules of human prudence. The Gift of Counsel would then serve no purpose. The ultimate prudential resolution would flow from the virtue of Prudence. The Gift would not be superior nor more perfect than the virtue, but subordinate to it.

On the other hand, if the Gift of Counsel makes one certain of the interior impulse of the Holy Ghost, he need not seek the advice of others in difficult and extraordinary matters, nor would he need to consult the Church and its ministers concerning his spiritual illuminations. He could conduct himself according to his own private spirit, even in exterior actions. But this is contrary to the universal practice of the Church. It opens the way for the heresies of the present day, which teach that each individual should be led according to his own spirit in spiritual things and matters of Faith.

5. Some are of the opinion—by way of reply to the first difficulty—that the Gift of Counsel differs from the virtue of the same name because Counsel takes place without discourse and inquiry,

³ Cf. I-II, q. 68, a. 2.

but simply by an illumination and impulse of the Holy Ghost. The virtue of prudence, on the other hand, is founded upon discourse and inquiry. They corroborate their argument from the fact that the virtue of Prudence has to do with means which are naturally proportioned to the end of its object. Consequently, in discovering that proportion some inquiry is necessary, because of the weakness of man's knowledge about the nature of things, and because of many contingencies in applying things to their ends.

Moreover, the Gift of Counsel does not look to means proportionate to the nature considered. It regards means in relation to divine power. Inquiry ceases. Comparison and discussion to determine proportionate means are not necessary. This opinion is voiced by Gregory Martinez.⁴

6. However, this solution does not have a solid foundation. No more should be attributed to Counsel in practical matters than is attributed to Wisdom and Knowledge in the speculative order. Yet, as has been shown, these Gifts are not always without rational discourse, which is connatural to man because he is rational. The Holy Ghost does not destroy this but fulfills it and perfects it. Rational discourse is even admitted in the infused knowledge of Christ.⁵ Furthermore there is no common experience to prove that such a light makes a man understand truths without any discourse and comparison.

Therefore, what is said of the other Gifts may be said for the Gift of Counsel. Sometimes, of course, God may grant a sudden illumination and freedom from doubt, which bursts forth from the one inspired without previous discourse and inquiry. But this happens occasionally even with the virtue of prudence, in fact even with acquired prudence one frequently chances upon the right thing to do without having given the matter any serious thought. However, this is not a frequent enough occurrence in supernatural things to postulate the special Gift of Counsel. These cases in which there is an experience of sudden thoughts and counsels are few. The Gifts of the Holy Ghost, especially those in the appetitive part of the soul, have frequent acts. So should the Gift of Counsel, which is regulative of those acts. Furthermore, it is not unfitting that anyone should use inquiry and rational discourse in

⁴ *Commentaria* in I-II, q. 68, a. 4, ad 2.

⁵ Cf. III, q. 11, a. 5.

choosing means which, not by their own nature, but by divine power, are ordered to an end. To know that these means are ordained by divine power and how and to what extent or measure involves much rational inquiry. Not without rational effort then (illuminated and guided by the Holy Ghost) can these things be known in a way connatural to reason, just as infused Knowledge and the Gifts of Knowledge and Wisdom can employ reasoning.

7. The same fundamental assertion must be maintained concerning Counsel which was laid down in the consideration of Knowledge and Wisdom. Not just any counsel, knowledge, or wisdom is here being considered but gifts of a mystical and affective character arising from loving knowledge. According to the very spirit of Counsel caution must direct the use of mystical language. Yet what has been written of Wisdom and Knowledge may be applied to Counsel. For Counsel directs actions not precisely as known by reason or by Faith or Prophecy (such direction can be found in sinners), but from love and an internal experience of divine things. In this experience a man is taught and is inspired concerning all things necessary for salvation, even with discourse and inquiry or the consultation of others. For the whole thing is under the inspiration of the Spirit Who, as Christ promised,⁶ would teach men all truth and His anointing would teach us concerning all things: discerning, inquiring, and acting.

8. Sacred Scripture often mentions taking counsel from God. Of wisdom and the pedagogy of God, it proclaims: *For her thoughts are more vast than the sea, and her counsels more deep than the great ocean. I, Wisdom, have poured out rivers.*⁷ Scripture takes an analogy from the clouds, which arise as vapor from the water of the sea, become heavy, and fall in rivers of rain. Thus the Counsel of God increases and takes its beginning in the great ocean of divinity, the ultimate end. From that immense sea of the Holy Ghost a man's thoughts become vast, no longer meager and tenuous like the thoughts and provisions of human reason. They become heavy with the sea of divine reasons which fecundate the heart as clouds showering long-desired rains. When, by that inspiration and counsel, these reasons are showered upon the heart to such a degree that they impress upon it a correct estimate of the ultimate end, it

⁶ Cf. *John*, xvi, 13 and *I John*, ii, 27.

⁷ *Ecclesiastes*, xxxiv, 39.

can truly be said with the Prophet *My Counsel is thy justification*.⁸ Anyone who acts with vigor and agility in attending to the justifications of God, anyone who in difficult matters determines upon what belong to the justifications of God, certainly can verify that his counsel is the justification of God. He cannot do this solely from human reasons, or merely as a man, but rather as an angel of great counsel. Moved and led by the spirit of a great advising angel, his thoughts become vast and he derives his counsel from a great sea.

9. The same idea may be derived from another passage on wisdom, *He shall direct his counsel, and his knowledge, and in his secrets shall he meditate*.⁹ Note that the direction of counsel is from God, which surely belongs to the Gift of Counsel or to the Spirit of Counsel. It is given when a man meditates upon God's secrets. What is more obscure or more hidden than the interior love of the will? For what is manifest belongs more to the intellect than what is hidden; *for everything that is made manifest is a light*.¹⁰ Whoever takes counsel from the Spirit, and by love and union with God meditates upon the secrets of God, is surely filled with the spirit of the Gift of Counsel and derives Counsel from God—he is one *who works according to the counsel of His will*.¹¹

10. From love and union with God, therefore, wisdom and loving and mystical knowledge are derived. By them the intellect is illuminated to judge of divine and created things from an experiential knowledge of God and internal taste of Him, in which Charity touches God primarily and creatures secondarily. Hence, the same source can enlighten and perfect the intellect in a practical way concerning actions.

The validity of this argument is quite clear. Prudence and Counsel receive a special force and a right estimation and adherence to the end, and a discernment of the means. Since creatures are to be used as means by which a man tends to God, the knowledge of creatures which is had through the Gift of Knowledge also provides for a prudential direction and counsel of the Holy Ghost concerning both means and actions. Therefore, there certainly is such a thing as a Gift of Counsel founded upon a mystical love and union with God.

⁸ *Psalm cxviii*, 24.

⁹ *Ecclesiastes*, xxxix, 10.

¹⁰ *Ephesians*, v, 8.

¹¹ *Ephesians*, i, 11.

In fine, whenever the speculative intellect is perfected, the practical intellect is likewise perfected, since the practical is founded upon the speculative, and prudence is directed by wisdom and knowledge. Therefore, if the speculative part of the soul admits of loving and mystical knowledge, judgment founded upon an experiential and internal taste of God, and a certain connaturality or assimilation to divine things, there should likewise be a perfection of the practical part through a union and connaturality with God. Such a perfection makes the soul more capable in judging actions and more perfect in the performance of them. It judges of means and takes counsel, not according to human reason and the ordinary human manner of acting for a supernatural end, but according to the Gifts of Wisdom and Knowledge and according to a divine confidence and trust in God, Who can order all means and conquer all difficulties.

The Gift of Counsel, therefore, is founded upon divine Hope in a special way. It orders the use of many means which can be chosen only with divine help and the omnipotence of God, upon which Hope is founded. However, Hope in a sinner is quite ineffectual when it is not formed by Charity. Yet, Hope in a just man, who has an experience of God's will and power for helping him, and who has experience of His benignity within himself, becomes the spirit of the Gift of Counsel. It moves him to apply himself vigorously and to conquer whatever difficult or extraordinary things must be done, such as suffering death, grief, and affliction, the contempt of riches and the naked following of Christ. In a word, it assists him in performing those works which require the Gifts of Fortitude, Piety, and Fear, as regulated by the Gift of Counsel.

11. Reply to objections: Practical Faith, operating through charity, is not sufficient to accomplish the work of Counsel. Faith is only practical in an eminent way as a higher and universal rule, not as a proximate rule applicable to works of the moment. Faith does not supply judgment of the means to be chosen. For such a judgment requires a more determined and particular virtue, a virtue which does not merely believe what ought to be known and done. This virtue must also discern and judge the means and manner of acting, the amount of intension and effort, the time, the measure, and such like. Faith does not treat of all these par-

ticalars. The virtue of prudence does, because its work is discretion and not belief. Faith teaches us God and shows Him as One to be loved and believed. Moreover, knowing other practical supernatural principles, it believes and it works through love. Yet it does not discern particular judgments, nor does it actually judge. The virtue of prudence takes care of this in regard to activity in the strictly human mode, while the Gift of Counsel performs the same function in actions of a higher mode.

12. No real difficulty should arise from the argument that the Gift of Counsel is unable to treat of divine things through a clear and evident light. Accordingly, it would seem to proceed through an obscure light—through Faith. Hence, the directing of action would belong more to Faith than to any additional gift.

13. In reply it can be noted that the same argument could be lodged against the infused virtue of prudence. It too does not have a clear and evident light since it proceeds without evidence in the supernatural order. Consequently, there would be no such thing as infused prudence and its function would be reduced to Faith. The argument as applied to prudence is obviously invalid. The same, then, may be affirmed in the case of the Gift of Counsel.

Even if it is granted that infused prudence is not clear, it does not follow that it is identical with Faith. Infused prudence is something which has its origin in Faith and is derived from it, just as acquired prudence is derived from practical principles and *synderesis*. It is obscure because of its dependence upon Faith, just as theology is obscure in this life because of its dependence upon Faith. Yet, theology is not Faith itself but a knowledge derived from Faith. Prudence, then, is a practical knowledge derived from Faith, but not identical with Faith.

The same holds for the Gift of Counsel, since Counsel is like the Prudence of the Spirit, for counsel is prudence. The truth is that the Gift of Counsel is regulated by the Gifts of Knowledge, Wisdom, and Understanding. All these of themselves seek clarity, since they are founded upon an experiential and loving union with God and upon Charity, which of itself demands governance by Vision, although in this life it is united to God by Faith. In the same way, Prudence or Counsel seeks practical clarity founded upon loving and experiential union, although in this life it is founded upon Faith. Moreover, theology and other subalternate

sciences, so long as they lack the actual influx of the subalternating science giving them clarity of principles, remain in obscurity.

14. Although the Gifts of Wisdom and Knowledge are practical as well as speculative, there is need for a distinct Gift of Counsel, prudentially governing and commanding works of virtue.¹² For eminently practical Wisdom and Knowledge treat of practical principles only in an abstract and scientific way and not in the particularized and discretionary manner necessary for action. Science, unlike Prudence and Discretion, is not concerned with individual contingencies. Consequently, the Gifts of Knowledge and Wisdom, even if they are practical, treat of practical things in an abstract and scientific way. Another judgment, virtue, or gift is necessary. It must treat of practical things in particular and consider the circumstances of actions in a discretionary, non-scientific manner.

15. Moreover, the infused virtue of prudence does not suffice for taking counsel in all matters to which men can be moved by the impulse of the Holy Ghost. Infused prudence is supernatural since it treats of supernatural matters by directing the infused virtues in their operations. Yet it does not know nor attain to supernatural actions except according to a human manner and the common rule of virtue.

Faith, it is true, attains to revealed truths through divine witness, yet it does not dictate what is to be done in particular cases. It leaves this to human judgment even in supernatural actions, such as religious worship, penance, and the like.

Human judgment, presupposing Faith, can be moved to judge either by its own zeal and industry, or by the divine impulse and motion as regards those things in which human diligence fails. The virtue of prudence serves in the first case (human mode). For the second type of judgment the Gift of Counsel is necessary. Both judgments come from Faith and deal with supernatural matters, yet each in different ways.

16. In reply to the second difficulty, relative to the material object of the Gift of Counsel,¹³ it must be noted that Counsel extends directly to all actions performed through the Gifts of the appetitive part of the soul, namely, Fortitude, Piety, and Fear. For, just as the virtue of prudence has as its object the actions of

¹² Cf. c. v., No. 2.

¹³ Cf. c. II, No. 3.

the cardinal virtues which act according to the rules of prudence, so too the Prudence which is a Gift has as its object the regulation and direction of the things which are performed by the appetitive part of the soul under the impulse of the Holy Ghost. If the Gift of Counsel is given to supplement the deficiencies of Prudence in things that exceed the common manner of acting, it should of its very nature direct actions desired and accomplished beyond the common manner of acting—acts of the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

Indirectly and secondarily, Counsel can even direct and regulate actions on a human level inasmuch as they are presupposed or subordinated to the divine. For Counsel can direct both matters of counsel and matters of precept. According to St. Thomas: ¹⁴ "The Gift of Counsel directs us in all the acts of the virtues and in all things ordained to the end of eternal life whether they are necessary for salvation or not." The motion of the Holy Ghost, since it is that of the most universal mover, extends to all things. The indigence and weakness of the rational creature certainly needs the assistance of the Holy Ghost in essentially supernatural matters exceeding all created power and even in many things within the natural order. For the soul is subject to many errors and dangers and contingencies, and human reason cannot foresee all things.

Finally, to attain eternal beatitude and to be directed through temporal things to that end, the soul needs an agility and moderation in using these temporal things so that it wavers neither to the right nor to the left. Hence it is necessary that Counsel moderate, at least secondarily, things of the natural order, and in a general way whatever belongs to human action, since all things are ordered to the one end. Because of the uncertainty of created things, surety is required from a higher instructor, the Holy Ghost, just as reason in its natural discourse is often corrected by Faith.

17. The answer is ready at hand for the objection that all ought to perform acts of the Gifts which are necessary for salvation, yet all actually do not have the Gift of Counsel. All the elect do have the Gift of Counsel. They may not have it in its higher form nor in the direction and judgment of natural and temporal matters. However, they have it concerning anything necessary for salvation, and for the disdain of temporal things lest they hinder and divert a man from celestial things. St. Gregory has expressed this most

¹⁴ II-II, q. 52, a. 4, ad 1 and 2.

elegantly.¹⁵ "Each one of the elect, while still confined to the world rises outside the world by his mind. He deplores the hardship of the exile which he bears. He rises toward the sublime fatherland with incessant stimuli of love. From this he discovers a salutary counsel in despising the things which perish. The more his knowledge of counsel increases, inciting him to despise perishable things, the more his grief increases, grief that he cannot enter into his eternal dwelling. That is why he strengthens his soul with wise counsel, and he considers all his actions with prudence and circumspection. So that no unexpected and unfavorable outcome may ensnare his action, he feels ahead gently with the foot of his reflections. He carefully plans his course of action so that haste may not drive him ahead without caution . . . nor immoral habits conquer him in open warfare . . . nor his acts of virtue be effaced by the infiltration of vainglory. The more he strives to live by Counsel, the more his mind is tried by the wearisomeness of the more narrow way." By Counsel, then, all these things are brought about in the souls of the elect.

18. The attempt to prove that many lack the Gift of Counsel because they go to others for advice proves the point rather than destroys it. It is part of divine counsel to have recourse to others for advice, in matters beyond one's own capacity. For the Holy Ghost does not manifest His abundance to all in such a way that they do not need communication with others. He instructs through some, the great enlighten the lesser, just as the superior angels illuminate the inferior. He communicates His gifts with a concomitant dependence upon the instruction of others. St. Augustine captured the situation in the words: ¹⁶ "O Lord, you reply to all who ask of thee, and at the one time, you answer all, even though they consult you on diverse matters. Clearly you answer them, though all do not clearly understand thee. All may ask advice of thee on whatever he wills, though they do not always hear the answer they desire. He is thy best servant who looks not so much to hear from thee what he himself desires, as to will what he hears from thee."

Therefore, in matters from God not clearly heard nor fully understood, it is necessary to consult others who are more enlightened.

¹⁵ *I Moralium*, c. 11, *PL*, lxxv, 543.

¹⁶ *X Confessionum*, c. 26, *PL*, xxii, 795.

Although Cornelius was visited by an angel and received a revelation from God, he was advised to seek out Peter for instruction. *Send and fetch Simon who is surnamed Peter, he will tell you what you should do.*¹⁷ By the Gift of Counsel, then, Cornelius sent for Peter for his instruction. Moreover, Christ Our Lord Himself appeared to Saul and sent him to the city that he might receive instructions: *Arise and go into the city, and it will be told thee what thou must do.*¹⁸ For according to St. Bonaventure:¹⁹ "The best counsel is to rise to seek the spouse and effectively find him in the street of His precepts and in the spiritual ways of His Counsels. Instructed in these and aroused by an Angel, the soul will find Him whom it loves. Rise, therefore, and go into the city to seek counsel, there it will be told to you what you should do."

19. The third difficulty concerning the act of Counsel can be solved by stating that, absolutely speaking, Counsel can exist in the determination and resolution of the act of taking counsel even without any doubt concerning the object. For this reason God, Christ, and the Blessed are found to have Counsel, according to the Prophet: *My counsel shall stand, and my will shall be done,*²⁰ and the Apostle, *who works all things according to the counsel of his will.*²¹ Yet, in this life, the Gift of Counsel is granted to take away doubt. There are grave doubts and difficulties in this life making men wanderers in pathless wastes, instead of on the sure road to the abiding city. Hence there is a special need for the Gift of Counsel for men to be moved by the Good Spirit, Who alone can lead them to the right land.

For this reason the Gift of Counsel should impress men with certitude and security, either by hidden inspiration and impulse, *for the spirit himself gives testimony to our spirit that we are sons of God,*²² or by the instruction and example of others whose works God uses to enlighten them.

Consequently, in this sphere of activity there is need for a distinction. A doubt can exist concerning the object of the act—whether this action should be performed. It can also exist concerning the illumination and impulse—whether it is from God. Sometimes, there is no doubt about the thing itself, since it is

¹⁷ Acts, x, 6.

¹⁸ Acts, ix, 6 and xxii, 10.

¹⁹ Cantica Canticorum, c. 2.

²⁰ Isaias, xli, 10.

²¹ Ephesians, i, 11.

²² Romans, viii, 16.

good and just in itself, for example, suffering martyrdom for the Faith. The goodness of the act is certain and there should be no consultation on the matter. St. Cyprian replied to the judge who said to him, "Take counsel": "Do as you are commanded. In a matter so just there is no need for consultation."²³ The same case occurs with one entering the religious state, provided he has no impediments; there is no doubt nor should there be any consultation on the matter.²⁴ However, there can be a question and consultation on the manner of entering. Counsel then is required for the accomplishment of the good act, not because of the object involved but because a person needs to be moved and impelled by the counsel of a higher impulse.

20. When the thing to be done is certain and secure, then anyone can be led by the Spirit moving within him, unless some legitimate impediment exists which the Holy Ghost does not wish to remove immediately by Himself but through others who are to be consulted. Then the Gift of Counsel moves men to consult others—they rise to go into the city (that is, they do not remain alone and within themselves, but they consult the community) to learn what they should do.

It must be noted, of course, that the Gift of Counsel always proceeds from the impulse of the Holy Ghost. Yet the determination of things to be done is not granted by the Holy Ghost to each man immediately. Rather, it is given by means of others whom He wishes men to consult, for St. Paul *preached to them the gospel, but separately with the men of authority, lest perhaps I should be running or had run in vain.*²⁵ The act of Counsel then may move men to consult others, and then to accept and do what seems right. However, in the case of a just and good act, though difficult if there seems to be legitimate impediment, the Gift of Counsel may move the soul interiorly to accept and determine what should be done. This interior movement does not remove doubt, for none exists, but rather it conquers difficulty and strengthens personal weakness. For it belongs to Prudence and right counsel to judge and to take counsel (synderesis and ebulia, virtues annexed to prudence) and also to command and apply to action, the most difficult part of

²³ Cf. Rev. Alban Butler, *Lives of the Saints*, Murphy, Baltimore, Metropolitan Press Edition, p. 486.

²⁴ Cf. II-II, q. 189, a. 10.

²⁵ *Galatians*, ii, 2.

Prudence. Hence, the Gift of Counsel operating in the place of Prudence and related to it, should take counsel and judge of the things to be done and also command and apply to action.

21. Once a correct and certain judgment has been made and doubt has been removed concerning the thing for which the advice of others has been sought, the problem of galvanizing the person into action remains. A man should be moved to this in a voluntary way, by an interior spirit, the Gift of Counsel.

Properly understood, this is not contrary to the practice of the Church. The question here is not concerned with matters of belief, nor with the judgment of truths which are to be preached to others, nor of approving doctrines, nor with other similar problems. On the contrary, personal industry and self-mastery in the things which are certain beyond any doubt is not against the practice of the Church. Indeed, it is quite in accord with this practice that anyone should be moved by an interior impulse to a good which is, at least with a moral certitude, undoubtedly beneficial, for such an impulse cannot come from an evil spirit.

22. If a doubt should arise concerning the thing to be done—whether it is good to do it, whether all the circumstances are agreeable, or whether the impulse to act is from God, then the Gift of Counsel does not move immediately to judgment and determination, much less to the execution of the act. To do so would be temerarious, so long as the doubt existed. However, Counsel does move toward a determination of whether or not the impulse is from God. According to the apostolic rule: *Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God,*²⁶ and again, *Do not despise prophecies. But test all things, hold fast that which is good.*²⁷ Ordinarily this examination and test should be done with the consultation and advice of others, since ordinarily the illumination of God is given with concomitant dependence upon others, inferiors being enlightened by superiors.

However, the Gift of Counsel is not subject to the virtue of Prudence, inferior to it, or to be resolved to it. For those who judge of revelations or divine truths should not judge according to the human standards of Prudence but according to the standards of Faith, to which the Gift of the Holy Ghost is subject and by

²⁶ *1 John*, iv, 1.

²⁷ *1 Thessalonians*, v, 20.

which it is regulated. These standards of Faith can be regulated by Gifts of the Holy Ghost, found in some other person perhaps in a more excellent manner. If human theological reasons are employed in the examination of such things, they are to be considered as secondary, serving only ministerially to explain the things of Faith or the impulse of the Holy Ghost. Hence, in the examination of spiritual and mystical matters, there is need for recourse to Scholastic theologians and to spiritual men who possess spiritual prudence and know how to judge the ways of the Spirit and can discern the differences of spirits.

23. Moreover, the Gift of Counsel does have a certitude from the Holy Ghost, not indeed that of Faith, but a prudential certitude founded upon the motion of the Holy Ghost.²⁸ It is of the essence of this prudential certitude that, when the things themselves are in doubt or are obscure, there should be a test and an examination by others who have the Gift in a more excellent manner and who penetrate and understand better the standards of Faith by which these spiritual ways and motions are to be examined. Since in doubt of this kind the Holy Ghost does not ordinarily give counsel and interior certitude without a dependence upon the examination of others, the Gift of Counsel moves a man to this examination. The Holy Ghost wishes to prove that the spirit is from God. He also wishes to have a man proceed humbly without presuming that of himself he can order all things which belong to the Gift of Counsel. The counsel of God is especially a counsel of humility and examination. Hence, a person should not be led by a private spirit, but by one which has been examined.

24. It is true that sometimes even without consultation the Holy Ghost moves men to a course of action surpassing human prudence. Samson killed himself, and holy virgins and martyrs willingly accepted death. Yet no general rule can be laid down. The Holy Ghost Himself in inspiring these actions gives a security and certitude with regard to the manner of acting. Caution is extremely important so that no one may be allowed to follow his personal inclinations, lest he be commanded by the spirit of error rather than the spirit of truth. The rule laid down by St. Augustine²⁹ should be followed: "He who hears that it is not lawful to

²⁸ Cf. c. 5, No. 4.

²⁹ *I De Civitate Dei*, c. 26, PL, xli, 39.

kill himself, let him do it only when He commands whose commandments it is not lawful to condemn. Moreover, let him see that the divine command contains no uncertainty." Before following an interior spirit and counsel without the examination, the approbation and communication of others (for ordinarily the Spirit moves through examination and communication of others) one should carefully consider whether his mind filled with the Spirit is serene and calm without the shadow of passion or trouble, for *the wisdom that is from above is first of all chaste, then peaceable, moderate, etc.*³⁰

From these effects one may determine whether or not his Counsel is from God. But even enjoying such peace and serenity he should weigh carefully whether there is any change or obscurity or fluctuation about whether the spirit is from God. For if in a sane and vigilant judgment he sees any change or doubt, it is a sign that God does not wish the things to be done immediately but only after an examination. For if it were to be done without an examination, God would supply what ought to be gained by an examination. He would leave the mind secure and certain that the act should be performed even without examination by others.

25. Moreover, if anyone should wish to persuade others that he has the spirit of God and speaks from such a spirit, he should not easily be believed. His case should always be submitted to the examination of wise and spiritual men. Otherwise he should not be accepted, especially in grave and extraordinary things.

If it is a question of public doctrine or a thing to be preached or taught in Church, no one should be allowed to teach merely because he says that he is sent by God (or that he has a revelation) unless he can prove it through a miracle or the express testimony of Scripture.

If it is not a matter of doctrine or a thing to be proposed for public belief but some particular and private thing, as when someone is advised by a man of approved life that something will benefit him or that God commands such and such, then, although one is not bound to believe it, he can use this advice in forming a prudent judgment. He can prudently act upon it, considering the moral goodness and fitness of the act proposed as well as the quality of

³⁰ James, iii, 17.

life and character of the one who proposes it. This is especially true if many who have not communicated with one another agree that an act has been commanded by God. Many have been admonished by holy men to perform acts pleasing to God. St. Benedict said many things by the spirit of Tobias the prophet, and St. Catherine of Siena, St. Bridget, St. Vincent Ferrer, St. Francis de Paola and many others said things which were to the edification of others. Yet when they said them they were not first subjected to an examination. The ancient prophets told kings to do many things by divine command even without performing miracles. Their admonitions were accepted without examination because of the quality of the person and the goodness of the thing commanded. The King Sedecius took Jeremias secretly into his house (without previous examination): *Is there, he said, any word from the Lord? And Jeremias said, There is. And he said, Thou shalt be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon.*³¹ At the voice of a single prophet, Roboam and his whole army did not make war upon the sons of Israel.³²

There are many other incidents scattered through Scripture which contain prophecies accepted without miracles. But a more extensive treatment of this question is not the burden of the present treatise. It is rather matter for the tract on Faith and prophecy.³³

(To be continued.)

³¹ *Jeremias*, xxxvii, 16.

³² *II Paralipomenon*, xi, 4.

³³ Cf. *Cursus Theologicus*, in *Secundam Secundae*, *Questio Prima*, *Disputatio Sexta*, De revelationibus privatis.

BOOK REVIEWS

Basic Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas. Edited and Annotated, with an Introduction, by A. C. PEGIS. New York: Random House, 1945. 2 vols.

The large American publishing firms rarely make mistakes; they know what the public wants and produce the books that satisfy it. That Random House should publish the *Basic Writings of St. Thomas* is a sign that there is a great demand for them. An easily available edition, not too highly priced, will bring his writings to the notice even of those who have felt no special need to have them. What the other results of the appearance of this edition may be is problematical. The widespread diffusion of the Bible, translated and printed in the vulgar tongues, had greatly diverse effects of good and ill. Many wrestled with the inspired words to their own destruction. A popular acquaintance with the writings of St. Thomas may have similarly diverse effects: for some they will be a revelation of a new world of thought; for others they will be matter for private and often distorted interpretation. Nevertheless, all should be grateful for this handy edition of an important part of St. Thomas' writings. Its appearance places a greater obligation on those who have been reared in the Thomistic tradition to serve as interpreters of the great Doctor to the American public.

Dr. Anton C. Pegis, professor of philosophy at Fordham University, was chosen by Random House as the editor. He is responsible for the choice of the "Basic Writings," the revision of the text of the English translation, done originally by Laurence Shapcote, O.P., the addition of historical references and annotations, for which the editor acknowledges his debt to the Ottawa-Piana *Summa Theologica*, a nineteen-page introduction, and a valuable bibliography and index of authors cited by St. Thomas.

Dr. Pegis was faced with a difficult task in attempting to choose the "Basic Writings" of St. Thomas. The choice made is a happy one—the entire first part of the *Summa*, much of the first half of the second part, a scrap from the second half of the second part, and a generous slice from the *Summa contra Gentiles*. This selection furnishes us with St. Thomas' doctrine on the Unity and Trinity of God, creation and divine government, the theology of man and the angels, the final end of human living, and the means to attain it, human acts, virtues, law, grace, and so forth.

Without minute comparison of the two texts, it is difficult to judge what revision of the original English translation has been done. A cursory view reveals that errors of translation still remain. A serious one should be

rectified in future printings: in the treatise on the Trinity, the word *diversa* is translated by *distinct*, which makes the English text contradict the Church's teaching on the Trinity.

The index of authors cited by St. Thomas is especially interesting, for it includes not only the names of the authors, but also the doctrines that St. Thomas refers to.

Of the four sections of Dr. Pegis' Introduction, the last two deal with the life and writings of St. Thomas and the details of the present edition of his "Basic Writings." The first section presents a brief historical sketch of the intellectual background of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and points to the crucial problem St. Thomas had to face—the unity of human knowledge and wisdom. The situation was so complicated that some even of the best minds of the age were coming to the conclusion that there was an unbridgeable gap between faith and reason, theology and philosophy. Some felt themselves forced to forego philosophy and trust in faith and theology alone; others less happily embraced the notion of a double standard of truth—that a proposition could be true in theology and false in philosophy, and vice versa.

St. Thomas confidently faced this problem and solved it; he realized in himself what Dr. Pegis seems to attribute to diverse persons: "But confronted by Greek reason, they began to discover another understanding and another wisdom; and alongside the contemplative and the mystic there began to emerge within Christian thought the theologian and the philosopher, even as alongside the monastery there emerged the university" (p. xxxviii).

In the second section of the Introduction, Dr. Pegis considers "the spirit and significance of St. Thomas Aquinas." If the reader is expecting to find in this section aid in understanding the "Basic Writings," he will be disappointed. The editor unfortunately chose to follow a course which in fact narrows the spirit and almost destroys the significance of St. Thomas.

As was mentioned above, the choice of the "Basic Writings" fell to the editor; he chose to present the theological works of St. Thomas and that choice can be heartily approved. Yet in this section of his Introduction, Dr. Pegis presents us with the philosopher and the historian of philosophy to the exclusion of the theologian. His theme is: "At the moment when it was needed, if only to stem the rashness of his contemporaries, St. Thomas Aquinas was perpetrating a philosophical revolution by freeing philosophy from the philosophers and reading the history of philosophy from the absolute point of view of philosophy itself" (p. xl).

While such a limitation of theme may be justifiable in itself, it cannot be excused if it leads to a onesidedness of presentation such as is found

here. For nine pages, Dr. Pegis plays up the opposition between Plato and Aristotle, between all the Doctors, Fathers, and theologians of the Church from Augustine to Bonaventure and St. Thomas; and all in the name of St. Thomas himself.

Now, there is evidence that St. Thomas read the history of philosophy differently. One day, after a disputation, the students at Santa Sabina, in Rome, listened to the determination of the great master, who said: "I reply that the ancients in their investigations of nature proceeded in accordance with the order of human knowledge. Wherefore, as human knowledge reaches the intellect through the senses, the early philosophers were intent on the domain of the senses, and thence by degrees reached the realm of the intellect." He then traced for them the development of philosophic thought on this point. In conclusion, he stated: "Subsequent to these, the philosophers, as Plato, Aristotle and their disciples, attained to the study of universal being; and hence they alone posited a universal cause of things, from which all others came into being, as Augustine states (*De Civ. Dei*, viii, 4). This is in agreement with the Catholic faith. . . ." (*Q. D. de Potentia*, q. 3, a. 5).

Dr. Pegis recommends to his readers a glance at the entries under "Plato" in the index at the end of Vol. 2. While they are at it, they might also glance at those under "St. Augustine," "St. John Damascene," and "Dionysius," the three greatest of many Christian Platonists whom St. Thomas cites. How, then, can the editor state: "Let us agree that an anti-Platonic Aristotle could and did separate St. Thomas Aquinas from Platonism . . ." (p. xliii)?

There is an understandable reason for the narrow view the editor takes of the spirit and significance of St. Thomas; it is his preoccupation with the philosophy of the saint. Now the philosopher is concerned primarily with the proper perfections of all reality; the theologian is interested primarily in the order of all things to God, as God knows that order. Each, without the other, is in grave danger of falling into error. The theologian, intent on the order of things, may ignore their proper perfections; the philosopher, satisfied with penetrating each level of reality in a way that is connatural to the human mind, may fail to perceive that created reality in comparison with the divine reality is as shadow to substance. It seems significant that more errors about God are usually attributed to Aristotle than to Plato, whereas more errors about creatures are attributed to Plato than to Aristotle.

The real significance of St. Thomas lies, not in the fact that he exorcised the ghost of Plato from Christian thought, but in the reverential way he treated both Plato and Aristotle together with the Platonists among the Fathers and Doctors of the Church. The *Summa Theologica* cannot be

understood without an appreciation of the Augustinian and Platonic elements in it. St. Thomas' great rectification of the Platonic tradition lies in this: he was convinced that a more perfect understanding of the proper perfections of created reality aided their ordering to God, that error about creatures tended to generate error about God. But he always insisted that order was the most divine thing in the universe and to penetrate that order he relied on Plato and the Christian Platonists and not on Aristotle.

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Method for the Easy Comprehension of History. By JOHN BODIN. (Translated, with an Introduction, by Beatrice Reynolds.) New York: Columbia University Press, 1945. Pp. 402, with index. \$6.00.

The "Method" is in reality a philosophy of history, propounded by a French legalist and intellectualist of the sixteenth century. The timeliness of a work on the philosophy of history is apparent. Recently, such an impetus has been given to historical studies that we are now in possession of more facts than the early historians ever dreamed of gathering together. Yet with all the facts and their definitive appraisals, the fundamental truths that underlie the study of history remain more or less shrouded in mystery. There is of course no lack of theories concerning these principles; yet there is little science concerning the nature of history in the minds of those who write it.

Leaving aside the lengthy introduction, which we shall mention when it refers to a point at issue in the text, we find in the first chapter of Bodin's work a discussion of the nature and the division of history. His definition is widely generic: "History is the true narration of things" (p. 15). This is obvious exaggeration, for history cannot hope to treat all things. History is the record of the past events of man. An event is a happening of some importance. Under the author's definition, there would be full justification for those writers who persistently perpetuate in their histories the most outlandish insignificancies. Trivial subjects should not be treated at any length. In spite of this error, Bodin was closer to the truth than many modern philosophers of history. He perceived first of all that history is only a medium (narration), and secondly that it treats of a singular, individual object. The first shows that he realized history is the medium rather than the events themselves. It is an extension of the human memory. The second point in its favor is that the definition rightly places the object of history in the particular, individual happening. This is im-

portant because it precludes the possibility of categorizing history as a true science. Certain knowledge is required for science. The particular event cannot supply such knowledge. These events are contingent things and cannot sustain a demonstrative proof.

Whether or not Bodin realized the full implication of his definition need not be discussed. However, it is to his credit that he did not fall into the error of later pseudoscientific historians, who attempt to set up as true principles extravagant generalizations built upon a mass of particular happenings. The materialistic (Marxist) philosophy of history tries to cloak its specious conclusions with an absolute metaphysical certitude.

There is a threefold division (p. 15) given for history: human, natural, and divine. This division will not bear critical examination, as is easily seen from the definition. Natural history, according to the author, is a development of the hidden causes of things. This is not history, but rather the study of the natural sciences and cosmology. Divine history, which was the third part of the division, is equally untenable in that it does not divide our subject. Since history is the record of the past events of man, it can hardly be applied to God who has no past. God is above the laws of time. He is eternity wherein present, past, and future are all wrapped up in the ever present *nunc*. On the other hand, if we consider the effects of God's action on man, for example, the Redemption or the founding of His church, we are back under human history or more precisely religious history. Therefore the divisions of history into natural and divine, as explained by Bodin, cannot be classed as valid divisions. Properly speaking, neither of them divides history.

After the treatment of the definition and division, there are lamentable lacunae. So far the order of treatment has been logical. Then, just when one would expect the positive exposition of the philosophy of history, there are innumerable digressions. In fact there never appears formally an explicit, well developed exposé of Bodin's philosophy of history. He commits what may be termed the sin of historicism. It consists in studying a series of antecedent problems to the detriment of the main problem under consideration. This defeats its very purpose, for it remains tendential and never leads to the acquisition of the end. Bodin starts out to give a philosophy, but he never sets forth the main part of his doctrine. He digresses in favor of the following disquisitions: "The Proper Arrangement of Historical Matter" (chap. 3), "The Choice of Historians" (chap. 4), and the "Correct Evaluation of Histories" (chap. 5). These are very interesting topics, but they do not touch the essence of the problem under discussion, namely, what is the true philosophy of history. For this reason the treatment may be called superficial. The penetration is scarcely intrinsic. Rather it remains on the surface and embraces a wide variety of interesting subjects which are none the less unessential and irrelevant.

In the Introduction (p. xxv) the author's shortcomings are somewhat excused. "Contradictory opinions . . . are due more to the scholastic method than to a hesitation on the part of the author." This is inexcusably misleading. Throughout the work, there is very little indication of any adherence to the Scholastic method. The lack of a logical order in the work as a whole, the omission of a formal treatise on the nature of the problem, and the over-all superficiality of treatment are just a few examples which indicate that the Scholastic method was definitely not the *modus procedendi*. On the contrary, many of these defects could have been avoided if the Scholastic method had been used by a competent philosopher.

In spite of the aforementioned lacunae, Bodin does furnish some material from which his philosophy of history can be given a more articulate form. "Who doubts that a historian ought to be a serious and an upright man—austere, intelligent, fluent, and as it were provided with knowledge of everyday public and private life, as well as of all great things?" (p. 55). A little later on in the same chapter (p. 82), the author lists the requirements for an historian: "the highest erudition, unusual integrity and the greatest experience in managing affairs." It is clear that the author believed that the historian must be a man of integrity—an upright man. This qualification, in truth, is a *sine qua non* for the historian. As has been seen, history is a medium. However, the simple account of the events is incapable of forcing the reader to either an affirmation or a denial regarding the truth of the events related. In other words, there is not a necessary connection between the subject and the predicate in any of the statements. They may be actual happenings, or the greater part of the "history" may be the product of a very creative imagination on the part of the author. What assurance can be obtained that a historical account is fact and not fiction? Bodin says: "There is no greater evidence of an untruthful historian than to be disapproved unreservedly by all writers" (p. 55). This is hardly a sufficient criterion. Very many times the critics are divided. The solution ultimately rests within the historian. He must be a man of integrity, a man of veracity and prudence. Without these requisites the history is worthless. With them the historian can give his account an extrinsic certitude. This is necessary since the singular, contingent object of history cannot generate intrinsic or scientific certitude.

The problem of whether or not the historian should pass judgment on the events which he has presented is left unsolved. "But grave doubts trouble me whether the historian ought to praise or to vituperate and to express judgments about the matter under discussion . . ." (p. 51). The resolution of the difficulty is evident from the definition: history is the record of the past events of man. It is not a critique on the wisdom or

folly of these actions. It is a record. The historian *qua* historian is not qualified to pass judgment. Bodin realized the inconsistency of the opposite opinion: "Since nothing is more difficult than to judge equitably, who will not severely censure a historian for expressing an opinion about the greatest directors of the State, when he himself has borne no share of public office or counsel?" (p. 51). A historian is not a philosopher, he is not a statesman, and he is not a soldier. When a historian *happens* to be a military tactician, any judgment which he makes on military maneuvers is not made *qua* historian. Thus when Caesar passed a judgment on military matters, he was not acting formally as an historian but rather as a general who was competent to offer a weighty opinion on military affairs.

In the latter part of the book, which is encyclopedic, Bodin reveals some of the unattractive features of the Renaissance. The new theories of that age are taken by him as scientifically sound doctrine. Many of the fleeting fancies which were supposed to be true science did not survive the century. A discussion of these errors would be both lengthy and pointless. Again there is conclusive evidence that Scholasticism was foreign to his make-up. The Introduction states that the author had "some theological training." In his case the benign interpretation of "some" is "a minimum."

St. Thomas Aquinas, the prince of theologians, is mentioned only twice, and in both instances Bodin misconstrues his doctrine. Without giving any reference, he states that Aquinas held that the world had a beginning but will not have an end (p. 312). Thomas taught that fire will consume the whole world. This will put an end to the world as we know it, that is, with its imperfections. His other reference to St. Thomas shows ignorance of the greatest theological works. Bodin thought that the Angelic Doctor "*twisted*" (p. 312) passages of sacred scripture. This is a gratuitous assumption and as such merits no serious consideration.

The scriptural references in this work leave much to be desired. A computation of the age of the world fixes the period of creation at approximately four thousand years before Christ (pp. 319-324). This calculation is erroneous as there are records which go back two thousand years beyond that period. Evidently there was a misinterpretation of the term "forty years" as it appears in the Book of Judges. Forty years is the time mentioned for the rule of several judges. The accepted teaching of Biblical scholars is that this refers to a generation and not forty numerical years. The second error in computing the age of the world from the Old Testament may be traced to the Book of Genesis. Apparently the author misunderstood the signification of some of the proper names mentioned there. To fix a definite time to the pre-Abraham patriarchal ages is extremely difficult. The proper names listed in Genesis (chap. 10) refer many times to cities and to groups of people rather than to individuals. Because of

these two miscalculations, Bodin greatly underestimated the true age of the world. In another reference to Sacred Scripture (p. 325) the veracity of some of the events subsequent to the deluge is impugned. On the whole, his references indicate a free and private interpretation. Unfortunately, these individualistic interpretations are mere fanciful hypotheses with no foundation in fact.

It is to be regretted that the talents of the translator were not applied to a more judicious selection. The subject which Bodin treated is still of vital interest today. In fact the need is more urgent because the confusion is greater. Thought has become more anthropocentric and as a consequence it is less perspicacious. This particular work, however, cannot be considered as a positive contribution. There is an admixture of truth and error. The former, unfortunately, is like the lonely flower which is all but stifled in the darkness of the underbrush. In the future, it is hoped, the *Records* will choose some of the masterpieces of the past. The works of Antoninus of Florence in history, those of Thomas Aquinas and Cajetan in philosophy and theology, and those of Albertus Magnus in science, just to mention a few, would be works eminently suitable for translation, for these are truly records of civilization.

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BRIEF NOTICES

Laval Théologique et Philosophique. Vol. I, n. 1. Québec: Editions de l'Université Laval, 1945. Revue Semestrielle. \$3.00.

The Editors of *THE THOMIST* are happy to welcome this new theological and philosophical review published by the respective faculties of Laval University. The first number gives promise of a bright future. Among the more important articles are the following: "Notre participation au sacerdoce du Christ," by L. Audet; "Considerations sur quelques principes fondamentaux de la doctrine du spéculatif et du pratique," by H. Pichette; "Notes on the Limit of a Variable," by J. Lalor; "La critique marxiste de la religion," by H. Legault; "La dialectique des limites comme critique de la raison," by C. de Koninck. An added feature is a section, entitled *Quodlibeta*, which is designed to serve as a forum for frank discussion of philosophical problems.

Discovering Plato. By ALEXANDRE KOYRÉ. Trans. by L. C. ROSENFELD. New York: Columbia University Press, 1945. Pp. 119, with index. \$1.50.

Alexandre Koyré is a former professor at the Sorbonne and at present is associated with the New School for Social Research in New York. Despite its brevity, his work is the most intelligent introduction to the dialogues of Plato that has appeared in English. Only four dialogues are considered: *Meno*, *Protagoras*, *Theaetetus*, and *Republic*. These were chosen because they are concerned with two fundamental Platonic problems, the relation of knowledge and virtue, and the relation of philosophy and politics.

Mr. Koyré is aware of the dissatisfaction most readers feel when they finish reading a dialogue of Plato, even with the aid of a commentator. He thinks that most commentators fail to give an intelligent account of what happens in a dialogue. His answer is based on the fact that Plato deliberately chose the dialogue form and was a master of it. He did not use the dialogue or the characters of the dialogue to express literally his own opinions. The dialogues are dramas, always directed to a spectator-auditor, who must collaborate with the author, understand his intentions, draw conclusions not only from what is said but from the action that unfolds before his eyes.

Meno is one of the best known Platonic dialogues. What is its "meaning," according to the author? "Thus the dialogue's unformulated conclusion, an answer to Meno's question, stands out in bold relief—yes, virtue can be taught, since it is science, but it cannot be taught to Meno" (p. 17).

Augustine's Quest of Wisdom. By VERNON J. BOURKE. Milwaukee: Bruce, 1945. Pp. 323, with index. \$3.00.

"The great central purpose of this book, however," says the general editor, "is to trace faithfully for our age the saint's spiritual as well as mental journey toward God" (p. vii).

Following his purpose, Mr. Bourke, Associate Professor of philosophy at St. Louis University, has written an excellent biography of St. Augustine. For the most part, the order of the chapters is chronological; three chapters before the last break the chronological continuity to analyze the contents of the greatest of St. Augustine's works: the *Fifteen Books on the Trinity*, the *Twelve Books on Genesis*, and *The City of God*.

The spiritual and intellectual quest of St. Augustine is well delineated prior and a little subsequent to his conversion. Mr. Bourke makes excellent use of the *Confessions*. The chapter on Augustine's conversion is thrilling.

"Wisdom is more active than all active things" (*Wis.* vii, 24). "They that eat me, shall yet hunger: and they that drink me, shall yet thirst" (*Eccles.* xxiv, 29). Somehow or other, the later part of Mr. Bourke's book fails to convey the sense of a vital quest. St. Augustine's wanderings in the shadows of false wisdom are told more excitingly than the tremendous sweep of his thought and his love after he had begun to taste of true wisdom. One gets the impression rather of the growing extension of St. Augustine's knowledge, but the movement of his mind from creatures to God, from God to creatures, is only vaguely suggested. Perhaps this is asking too much of a biographer; but then he promised us Augustine's quest of wisdom.

Encyclopedia of Religion. Ed. by VERGILIUS FERM. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1945. Pp. 844. \$10.00.

The editor took upon himself the difficult task of writing the article on religion for the Encyclopedia. The result is illuminating and certainly the best commentary on the work itself. Mr. Ferm first lists ten mistakes that must be avoided in defining religion, such as, for example, "to define religion in connection with a god concept." He then sets forth a group of statements that he hopes may serve as descriptive definitions. "A religion is a set of meanings and behaviors having reference to individuals who are or were or could be religious." "Again religion is a generic term referring to all conceivable religions, formal or informal." These are mere dictionary definitions of the way the word religion is used by men. A third statement is offered: "To be religious is to effect in some way and in some measure a vital adjustment (however tentative and incomplete) to

whatever is reacted to or regarded implicitly or explicitly as worthy of serious and ulterior concern." This shows some attempt at a real definition, but it is too broad. Would not a child's tentative adjustment to a dose of castor oil because of the serious possibility of an ulterior spanking be a religious attitude according to this definition? The fact is that Mr. Ferm is opposed to a definition of religion that would have any real content; to give the concept of religion a determinate meaning would exclude many articles found in the encyclopedia. The descriptive definitions he formulated do justify the contents of the work.

This Encyclopedia may be of some value to Catholic theologians and philosophers; it cannot be recommended to the ordinary reader or casual student.

La Liberté des Enfants de Dieu. Richesse et Pauvreté. Rites et Prières de la Messe. By ST. THOMAS AQUINAS. (Textes Spirituels) Montreal: Editions de l'Arbre, 1945. \$.25 each.

These three pamphlets contain choice texts of St. Thomas Aquinas on the spiritual subjects indicated in the titles. The texts come from almost all the works of the saint and present a well unified picture of his doctrine on these subjects. In a few cases, the editor, A. M. Brunet, O. P., adds some words of commentary. The idea of this series of *Textes Spirituels* is excellent and we hope that something similar will be done in English.

Mediaeval Studies. Vol. VII (1945). Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies. \$5.00.

The seventh Volume of *Mediaeval Studies* contains, among others, the following studies of special interest: "The Meaning of 'Silva' in the Communtary on the *Timaeus* of Plato by Chalcidius," by J. R. O'Donnell; "The Doctrine of St. Gregory of Nyssa on Man as the Image of God," by J. T. Muckle; "*Fin' Amors*: the Pure Love of the Troubadors, its Amorality and Possible Source," by A. J. Denomy; "A Treatise on Love by Ibn Sina. Translated," by Emil L. Fackenheim; "Robert Courson on Penance," by V. L. Kennedy.

BOOKS RECEIVED

- Bergson, H. *The Creative Mind*. Trans. by M. L. Andison. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1945. Pp. 370. \$3.75.
- Esser, G. *Psychologia*. Techny, Ill.: Mission Press, 1945. Pp. 499, with index. \$3.00.
- Finlayson, C. *Dios y la Filosofia*. Medellin, Columbia: Universidad de Antioquia, 1945. Pp. 261.
- Houghton, W. E. *The Art of Newman's Apologia*. Princeton, N. J.: Yale University Press, 1945. Pp. 116, with index. \$2.50.
- Johnson, F. Ernest (Ed.). *World Order: Its Intellectual and Cultural Foundations*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1945. Pp. 247, with index. \$2.00.
- Junkersfeld, Sr. M. Julianne, *The Aristotian-Thomistic Concept of Chance*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame, 1945. Pp. 86.
- MacIver, R. M. (Ed.) *Civilization and Group Relationships*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1945. Pp. 177, with index. \$2.00.
- Sturzo, L. *Spiritual Problems of Our Times*. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1945. Pp. 182. \$2.00.
- Yelle, G. and Fournier, R. *Apologetica*. Montreal: Grand Seminaire, 1945. Pp. 351, with index.